

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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## THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

PART THE THIRD. HARTRIGHT'S NARRATIVE.

I.

FOUR months passed. April came—the month of Spring; the month of change.

The course of Time had flowed through the interval since the winter, peacefully and happily in our new home. I had turned my long leisure to good account; had largely increased my sources of employment; and had placed our means of subsistence on surer grounds. Freed from the suspense and the anxiety which had tried her so sorely, and hung over her so long, Marian's spirits rallied; and her natural energy of character began to assert itself again, with something, if not all, of the freedom and the vigour of former times.

More pliable under change than her sister, Laura showed more plainly the progress made by the healing influences of her new life. The worn and wasted look which had prematurely aged her face, was fast leaving it; and the expression which had been the first of its charms in past days, was the first of its beauties that now returned. My closest observation of her detected but one serious result of the conspiracy which had once threatened her reason and her life. Her memory of events, from the period of her leaving Blackwater Park to the period of our meeting in the burial-ground of Limmeridge Church, was lost beyond all hope of recovery. At the slightest reference to that time, she changed and trembled still; her words became confused; her memory wandered and lost itself as helplessly as ever. Here, and here only, the traces of the past lay deep—too deep to be effaced.

In all else, she was now so far on the way to recovery, that, on her best and brightest days, she sometimes looked and spoke like the Laura of old times. The happy change wrought its natural result in us both. From their long slumber, on her side and on mine, those imperishable memories of our past life in Cumberland now awoke, which were one and all alike, the memories of our love.

Gradually and insensibly, our daily relations towards each other became constrained. The fond words which I had spoken to her so naturally, in the days of her sorrow and her suffering, faltered strangely on my lips. In the time when my dread of losing her was most

present to my mind, I had always kissed her when she left me at night and when she met me in the morning. The kiss seemed now to have dropped between us—to be lost out of our lives. Our hands began to tremble again when they met. We hardly ever looked long at one another out of Marian's presence. The talk often flagged between us when we were alone. When I touched her by accident, I felt my heart beating fast, as it used to beat at Limmeridge House—I saw the lovely answering flush glowing again in her cheeks, as if we were back among the Cumberland Hills, in our past characters of master and pupil once more. She had long intervals of silence and thoughtfulness; and denied she had been thinking, when Marian asked her the question. I surprised myself, one day, neglecting my work, to dream over the little water-colour portrait of her which I had taken in the summer-house where we first met—just as I used to neglect Mr. Fairlie's drawings, to dream over the same likeness, when it was newly finished in the bygone time. Changed as all the circumstances now were, our position towards each other in the golden days of our first companionship, seemed to be revived with the revival of our love. It was as if Time had drifted us back, on the wreck of our early hopes, to the old familiar shore!

To any other woman, I could have spoken the decisive words which I still hesitated to speak to *her*. The utter helplessness of her position; her friendless dependence on all the forbearing gentleness that I could show her; my fear of touching too soon some secret sensitiveness in her, which my instinct, as a man, might not have been fine enough to discover—these considerations, and others like them, kept me self-distrustfully silent. And yet, I knew that the restraint on both sides must be ended; that the relations in which we stood towards one another must be altered, in some settled manner, for the future; and that it rested with me, in the first instance, to recognise the necessity for a change.

The more I thought of our position, the harder the attempt to alter it appeared, while the domestic conditions on which we three had been living together since the winter, remained undisturbed. I cannot account for the capricious state of mind in which this feeling originated—but the idea nevertheless possessed me, that some previous change of place and circumstances, some sudden break in the quiet monotony of our lives,

so managed as to vary the home aspect under which we had been accustomed to see each other, might prepare the way for me to speak, and might make it easier and less embarrassing for Laura and Marian to hear.

With this purpose in view, I said, one morning, that I thought we had all earned a little holiday and a change of scene. After some consideration, it was decided that we should go for a fortnight to the sea-side. On the next day, we left Fulham for a quiet town on the south coast. At that early season of the year, we were the only visitors in the place. The cliffs, the beach, and the walks inland, were all in the solitary condition which was most welcome to us. The air was mild; the prospects over hill and wood and down were beautifully varied by the shifting April light and shade; and the restless sea leapt under our windows, as if it felt like the land the glow and freshness of spring.

I owed it to Marian to consult her before I spoke to Laura, and to be guided afterwards by her advice.

On the third day from our arrival, I found a fit opportunity of speaking to her alone. The moment we looked at one another, her quick instinct detected the thought in my mind before I could give it expression. With her customary energy and directness, she spoke at once, and spoke first.

"You are thinking of that subject which was mentioned between us on the evening of your return from Hampshire," she said. "I have been expecting you to allude to it, for some time past. There must be a change in our little household, Walter; we cannot go on much longer as we are now. I see it as plainly as you do—as plainly as Laura sees it, though she says nothing. How strangely the old times in Cumberland seem to have come back! You and I are together again; and the one subject of interest between us is Laura once more. I could almost fancy that this room is the summer-house at Limmeridge, and that those waves beyond us are beating on our sea-shore."

"I was guided by your advice in those past days," I said; "and now, Marian, with reliance tenfold greater, I will be guided by it again."

She answered by pressing my hand. I saw that the generous, impulsive nature of the woman was deeply touched by my reference to the past. We sat together near the window; and, while I spoke and she listened, we looked at the glory of the sunlight shining on the majesty of the sea.

"Whatever comes of this confidence between us," I said, "whether it ends happily or sorrowfully for me, Laura's interests will still be the interests of my life. When we leave this place, on whatever terms we leave it, my determination to wrest from Count Fosco the confession which I failed to obtain from his accomplice, goes back with me to London, as certainly as I go back myself. Neither you nor I can tell how that man may turn on me, if I bring him to bay; we only know by his own words and actions, that he is capable of striking

at me, through Laura, without a moment's hesitation, or a moment's remorse. In our present position, I have no claim on her, which society sanctions, which the law allows, to strengthen me in resisting *him*, and in protecting *her*. This places me at a serious disadvantage. If I am to fight our cause with the Count, strong in the consciousness of Laura's safety, I must fight it for my Wife. Do you agree to that, Marian, so far?"

"To every word of it," she answered.

"I will not plead out of my own heart," I went on; "I will not appeal to the love which has survived all changes and all shocks—I will rest my only vindication of myself for thinking of her and speaking of her as my wife, on what I have just said. If the chance of forcing a confession from the Count, is, as I believe it to be, the last chance left of publicly establishing the fact of Laura's existence, the least selfish reason that I can advance for our marriage is recognised by us both. But I may be wrong in my conviction; other means of achieving our purpose may be in our power, which are less uncertain and less dangerous. I have searched anxiously, in my own mind, for those means—and I have not found them. Have you?"

"No. I have thought about it, too, and thought in vain."

"In all likelihood," I continued, "the same questions have occurred to you, in considering this difficult subject, which have occurred to me. Ought we to return with her to Limmeridge, now that she is like herself again, and trust to the recognition of her by the people of the village, or by the children at the school? Ought we to appeal to the practical test of her handwriting? Suppose we did so. Suppose the recognition of her obtained, and the identity of the handwriting established. Would success in both those cases do more than supply an excellent foundation for a trial in a court of law? Would the recognition and the handwriting prove her identity to Mr. Fairlie and take her back to Limmeridge House, against the evidence of her aunt, against the evidence of the medical certificate, against the fact of the funeral and the fact of the inscription on the tomb? No! We could only hope to succeed in throwing a serious doubt on the assertion of her death—a doubt which nothing short of a legal inquiry can settle. I will assume that we possess (what we have certainly not got) money enough to carry this inquiry on through all its stages. I will assume that Mr. Fairlie's prejudices might be reasoned away; that the false testimony of the Count and his wife, and all the rest of the false testimony, might be confuted; that the recognition could not possibly be ascribed to a mistake between Laura and Anne Catherick, or the handwriting be declared by our enemies to be a clever fraud—all these are assumptions which, more or less, set plain probabilities at defiance, but let them pass—and let us ask ourselves what would be the first consequence of the first questions put to Laura herself on the subject of the conspiracy. We know only too

well what the consequence would be—for we know that she has never recovered her memory of what happened to her in London. Examine her privately, or examine her publicly, she is utterly incapable of assisting the assertion of her own case. If you don't see this, Marian, as plainly as I see it, we will go to Limmeridge and try the experiment, to-morrow."

"I *do* see it, Walter. Even if we had the means of paying all the law expenses, even if we succeeded in the end, the delays would be unendurable; the perpetual suspense, after what we have suffered already, would be heart-breaking. You are right about the hopelessness of going to Limmeridge. I wish I could feel sure that you are right also in determining to try that last chance with the Count. *Is it a chance at all?*"

"Beyond a doubt, Yes. It is the chance of recovering the lost date of Laura's journey to London. Without returning to the reasons I gave you some time since, I am still as firmly persuaded as ever, that there is a discrepancy between the date of that journey and the date on the certificate of death. There lies the weak point of the whole conspiracy—it crumbles to pieces if we attack it in that way; and the means of attacking it are in possession of the Count—"

"Not in his possession only!" Marian eagerly interposed. "Surely, Walter, we have both of us overlooked, in the strangest manner, the letter which Laura wrote to Mrs. Vesey, and which Mrs. Michelson posted, from Blackwater Park? Even if there is no date to the letter (which is only too probable), the post-mark would help us."

"I remembered the letter, Marian—though, in the press of other anxieties and other disappointments on my mind, I may have omitted to tell you about it, at the time. When I went to Mrs. Vesey's to inquire if Laura had really slept there, and when I heard that she had never been near the house, I asked for her letter from Blackwater Park. The letter was given to me—but the envelope was lost. It had been thrown into the waste-paper basket, and long since destroyed."

"Was there no date to the letter?"

"None. Not even the day of the week was mentioned. You can judge for yourself. I have the letter in my pocket-book, with the other papers which I always keep about me. Look. She only writes these few lines:—'Dearest Mrs. Vesey, I am in sad distress and anxiety, and I may come to your house to-morrow night and ask for a bed. I can't tell you what is the matter in this letter—I write it in such fear of being found out that I can fix my mind on nothing. Pray be at home to see me. I will give you a thousand kisses, and tell you everything. Your affectionate Laura.' What help is there in those lines? None. I say it again, the last means left of attacking the conspiracy by recovering the lost date are in the possession of the Count. If I succeed in wresting them from him, the object of your life and

mine is fulfilled. If I fail, the wrong that Laura has suffered, will, in this world, never be redressed."

"Do you fear failure, yourself, Walter?"

"I dare not anticipate success; and, for that very reason, Marian, I speak openly and plainly, as I have spoken now. In my heart and my conscience, I can say it—Laura's hopes for the future are at their lowest ebb. I know that her fortune is gone; I know that the last chance of restoring her to her place in the world lies at the mercy of her worst enemy, of a man who is now absolutely unassailable, and who may remain unassailable to the end. With every worldly advantage gone from her; with all prospect of recovering her rank and station more than doubtful; with no clearer future before her than the future which her husband can provide—the poor drawing-master may harmlessly open his heart at last. In the days of her prosperity, Marian, I was only the teacher who guided her hand—I ask for it, in her adversity, as the hand of my wife!"

Marian's eyes met mine affectionately—I could say no more. My heart was full, my lips were trembling. In spite of myself, I was in danger of appealing to her pity. I got up to leave the room. She rose at the same moment, laid her hand gently on my shoulder, and stopped me.

"Walter!" she said, "I once parted you both, for your good and for hers. Wait here, my Brother!—wait, my dearest, best friend, till Laura comes, and tells you what I have done now!"

For the first time since the farewell morning at Limmeridge, she touched my forehead with her lips. A tear dropped on my face, as she kissed me. She turned quickly, pointed to the chair from which I had risen, and left the room.

I sat down alone at the window, to wait through the crisis of my life. My mind, in that breathless interval, felt like a total blank. I was conscious of nothing but a painful intensity of all familiar perceptions. The sun grew blinding bright; the white sea birds chasing each other far beyond me, seemed to be flitting before my face; the mellow murmur of the waves on the beach was like thunder in my ears.

The door opened; and Laura came in alone. So she had entered the breakfast-room at Limmeridge House, on the morning when we parted. Slowly and falteringly, in sorrow and in hesitation, she had once approached me. Now, she came with the haste of happiness in her feet, with the light of happiness radiant in her face. Of their own accord, those dear arms clasped themselves round me; of their own accord, the sweet lips came to meet mine. "My darling!" she whispered, "we may own we love each other, now!" Her head nestled with a tender contentedness on my bosom. "Oh," she said, innocently, "I am so happy at last!"

Ten days later, we were happier still. We were married.

## II.

THE course of this narrative, steadily flowing

on, bears me away from the morning-time of our married life, and carries me forward to the End.

In a fortnight more we three were back in London; and the shadow was stealing over us of the struggle to come.

Marian and I were careful to keep Laura in ignorance of the cause that had hurried us back—the necessity of making sure of the Count. It was now the beginning of May, and his term of occupation at the house in Forest-road expired in June. If he renewed it (and I had reasons, shortly to be mentioned, for anticipating that he would), I might be certain of his not escaping me. But, if by any chance he disappointed my expectations, and left the country—then, I had no time to lose in arming myself to meet him as I best might.

In the first fulness of my new happiness, there had been moments when my resolution faltered—moments, when I was tempted to be safely content, now that the dearest aspiration of my life was fulfilled in the possession of Laura's love. For the first time, I thought faint-heartedly of the greatness of the risk; of the adverse chances arrayed against me; of the fair promise of our new lives, and of the peril in which I might place the happiness which we had so hardly earned. Yes! let me own it honestly. For a brief time, I wandered, in the sweet guiding of love, far from the purpose to which I had been true, under sterner discipline and in darker days. Innocently, Laura had tempted me aside from the hard path—innocently, she was destined to lead me back again. At times, dreams of the terrible past still disconnectedly recalled to her, in the mystery of sleep, the events of which her waking memory had lost all trace. One night (barely two weeks after our marriage), when I was watching her at rest, I saw the tears come slowly through her closed eyelids, I heard the faint murmuring words escape her which told me that her spirit was back again on the fatal journey from Blackwater Park. That unconscious appeal, so touching and so awful in the sacredness of her sleep, ran through me like fire. The next day was the day we came back to London—the day when my resolution returned to me with tenfold strength.

The first necessity was to know something of the man. Thus far, the true story of his life was an impenetrable mystery to me.

I began with such scanty sources of information as were at my own disposal. The important narrative written by Mr. Frederick Fairlie (which Marian had obtained by following the directions I had given to her in the winter) proved to be of no service to the special object with which I now looked at it. While reading it, I reconsidered the disclosure revealed to me by Mrs. Clements, of the series of deceptions which had brought Anne Catherick to London, and which had there devoted her to the interests of the conspiracy. Here, again, the Count had not openly committed himself; here again, he was, to all practical purpose, out of my reach.

I next returned to Marian's journal at Black-

water Park. At my request she read to me again a passage which referred to her past curiosity about the Count, and to the few particulars which she had discovered relating to him.

The passage to which I allude occurs in that part of her journal which delineates his character and his personal appearance. She describes him as "not having crossed the frontiers of his native country for years past"—as "anxious to know if any Italian gentlemen were settled in the nearest town to Blackwater Park"—as "receiving letters with all sorts of odd stamps on them, and one with a large, official-looking seal on it." She is inclined to consider that his long absence from his native country may be accounted for by assuming that he is a political exile. But she is, on the other hand, unable to reconcile this idea with his reception of the letter from abroad, bearing "the large official-looking seal"—letters from the Continent addressed to political exiles being usually the last to court attention from foreign post-offices in that way.

The considerations thus presented to me in the diary, joined to certain surmises of my own that grew out of them, suggested a conclusion which I wondered I had not arrived at before. I now said to myself—what Laura had once said to Marian at Blackwater Park; what Madame Fosco had overheard by listening at the door—the Count is a Spy!

Laura had applied the word to him at hazard, in natural anger at his proceedings towards herself. I applied it to him, with the deliberate conviction that his vocation in life was the vocation of a Spy. On this assumption, the reason for his extraordinary stay in England, so long after the objects of the conspiracy had been gained, became, to my mind, quite intelligible.

The year of which I am now writing, was the year of the famous Crystal Palace Exhibition in Hyde Park. Foreigners, in unusually large numbers, had arrived already, and were still arriving, in England. Men were among us, by thousands, whom the ceaseless distrustfulness of their governments had followed privately, by means of appointed agents, to our shores. My surmises did not for a moment class a man of the Count's abilities and social position with the ordinary rank and file of foreign spies. I suspected him of holding a position of authority, of being entrusted, by the government which he secretly served, with the organisation and management of agents specially employed in this country, both men and women; and I believed Mrs. Rubelle, who had been so opportunely found to act as nurse at Blackwater Park, to be, in all probability, one of the number.

Assuming that this idea of mine had a foundation in truth, the position of the Count might prove to be more assailable than I had hitherto ventured to hope. To whom could I apply to know something more of the man's history, and of the man himself, than I knew now?

In this emergency, it naturally occurred to my mind that a countryman of his own, on



whom I could rely, might be the fittest person to help me. The first man whom I thought of, under these circumstances, was also the only Italian with whom I was intimately acquainted—my quaint little friend, Professor Pesca.

The Professor has been so long absent from these pages, that he has run some risk of being forgotten altogether. It is the necessary law of such a story as mine, that the persons concerned in it only appear when the course of events takes them up—they come and go, not by favour of my personal partiality, but by right of their direct connexion with the circumstances to be detailed. For this reason, not Pesca only, but my mother and sister as well, have been left far in the background of the narrative. My visits to the Hampstead cottage; my mother's lamentable belief in the denial of Laura's identity which the conspiracy had accomplished; my vain efforts to overcome the prejudice, on her part and on my sister's, to which, in their jealous affection for me, they both continued to adhere; the painful necessity which that prejudice imposed on me of concealing my marriage from them till they had learnt to do justice to my wife—all these little domestic occurrences have been left unrecorded, because they were not essential to the main interest of the story. It is nothing that they added to my anxieties and embittered my disappointments—the steady march of events has inexorably passed them by.

For the same reason, I have said nothing, here, of the consolation that I found in Pesca's brotherly affection for me, when I saw him again after the sudden cessation of my residence at Limmeridge House. I have not recorded the fidelity with which my warm-hearted little friend followed me to the place of embarkation, when I sailed for Central America, or the noisy transport of joy with which he received me when we next met in London. If I had felt justified in accepting the offers of service which he made to me, on my return, he would have appeared again, long ere this. But, though I knew that his honour and his courage were to be implicitly relied on, I was not so sure that his discretion was to be trusted; and, for that reason only, I followed the course of all my inquiries alone. It will now be sufficiently understood that Pesca was not separated from all connexion with me and my interests, although he has hitherto been separated from all connexion with the progress of this narrative. He was as true and as ready a friend of mine still, as ever he had been in his life.

Before I summoned Pesca to my assistance, it was necessary to see for myself what sort of man I had to deal with. Up to this time, I had never once set eyes on Count Fosco.

Three days after my return with Laura and Marian to London, I set forth alone for Forest-road, St. John's Wood, between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning. It was a fine day—I had some hours to spare—and I thought it likely, if I waited a little for him, that the Count might

be tempted out. I had no great reason to fear the chance of his recognising me in the daytime, for the only occasion when I had been seen by him was the occasion on which he had followed me home at night.

No one appeared at the windows in the front of the house. I walked down a turning which ran past the side of it, and looked over the low garden wall. One of the back windows on the lower floor was thrown up, and a net was stretched across the opening. I saw nobody; but I heard, in the room, first a shrill whistling and singing of birds—then, the deep ringing voice which Marian's description had made familiar to me. "Come out on my little finger, my pret-pret-pretties!" cried the voice. "Come out, and hop up-stairs! One, two, three—and up! Three, two, one—and down! One, two, three—twit-twit-twit-tweet!" The Count was exercising his canaries, as he used to exercise them in Marian's time, at Blackwater Park.

I waited a little while, and the singing and the whistling ceased. "Come, kiss me, my pretties!" said the deep voice. There was a responsive twittering and chirping—a low, oily laugh—a silence of a minute or so—and then I heard the opening of the house door. I turned, and retraced my steps. The magnificent melody of the Prayer in Rossini's "Moses," sung in a sonorous bass voice, rose grandly through the suburban silence of the place. The front garden gate opened and closed. The Count had come out.

He crossed the road, and walked towards the western boundary of the Regent's Park. I kept on my own side of the way, a little behind him, and walked in that direction also.

Marian had prepared me for his high stature, his monstrous corpulence, and his ostentatious mourning garments—but not for the horrible freshness and cheerfulness and vitality of the man. He carried his sixty years as if they had been fewer than forty. He sauntered along, wearing his hat a little on one side, with a light jaunty step; swinging his big stick; humming to himself; looking up, from time to time, at the houses and gardens on either side of him, with superb, smiling patronage. If a stranger had been told that the whole neighbourhood belonged to him, that stranger would not have been surprised to hear it. He never looked back: he paid no apparent attention to me, no apparent attention to any one who passed him on his own side of the road—except, now and then, when he smiled and smirked, with an easy, paternal good humour, at the nurserymaids and the children whom he met. In this way, he led me on, till we reached a colony of shops outside the western terraces of the Park.

Here, he stopped at a pastrycook's, went in (probably to give an order), and came out again immediately with a tart in his hand. An Italian was grinding an organ before the shop, and a miserable little shrivelled monkey was sitting on the instrument. The Count stopped; bit a piece for himself out of the tart; and gravely handed the rest to the monkey. "My poor little man!"

he said, with grotesque tenderness; "you look hungry. In the sacred name of humanity, I offer you some lunch!" The organ-grinder piteously put in his claim to a penny from the benevolent stranger. The Count shrugged his shoulders contemptuously—and passed on.

We reached the streets and the better class of shops, between the New-road and Oxford-street. The Count stopped again, and entered a small optician's shop, with an inscription in the window, announcing that repairs were neatly executed inside. He came out again, with an opera-glass in his hand; walked a few paces on; and stopped to look at a bill of the Opera, placed outside a music-seller's shop. He read the bill attentively, considered a moment, and then hailed an empty cab as it passed him. "Opera-box-office," he said to the man—and was driven away.

I crossed the road, and looked at the bill in my turn. The performance announced was "Lucrezia Borgia," and it was to take place that evening. The opera-glass in the Count's hand, his careful reading of the bill, and his direction to the cabman, all suggested that he proposed making one of the audience. I had the means of getting an admission for myself and a friend, to the pit, by applying to one of the scene-painters attached to the theatre, with whom I had been well acquainted in past times. There was a chance, at least, that the Count might be easily visible among the audience, to me, and to any one with me; and, in this case, I had the means of ascertaining whether Pesca knew his countryman, or not, that very night.

This consideration at once decided the disposal of my evening. I procured the tickets, leaving a note at the Professor's lodgings on the way. At a quarter to eight, I called to take him with me to the theatre. My little friend was in a state of the highest excitement, with a festive flower in his button-hole, and the largest opera-glass I ever saw hugged up under his arm.

"Are you ready?" I asked.

"Right-all-right," said Pesca.

We started for the theatre.

### III.

THE last notes of the introduction to the opera were being played, and the seats in the pit were all filled, when Pesca and I reached the theatre.

There was plenty of room, however, in the passage that ran round the pit, which was precisely the position best calculated to answer the purpose for which I was attending the performance. I went first to the barrier separating us from the stalls; and looked for the Count in that part of the theatre. He was not there. Returning along the passage, on the left hand side from the stage, and looking about me attentively, I discovered him in the pit. He occupied an excellent place, some twelve or fourteen seats from the end of a bench, within three rows of the stalls. I placed myself exactly on a line with him; Pesca standing by my side. The Pro-

fessor was not yet aware of the purpose for which I had brought him to the theatre, and he was rather surprised that we did not move nearer to the stage.

The curtain rose, and the opera began.

Throughout the whole of the first act, we remained in our position; the Count, absorbed by the orchestra and the stage, never casting so much as a chance glance at us. Not a note of Donizetti's delicious music was lost on him. There he sat, high above his neighbours, smiling, and nodding his great head enjoyingly, from time to time. When the people near him applauded the close of an air (as an English audience in such circumstances always *will* applaud), without the least consideration for the orchestral movement which immediately followed it, he looked round at them with an expression of compassionate remonstrance, and held up one hand with a gesture of polite entreaty. At the more refined passages of the singing, at the more delicate phrases of the music, which passed unapplauded by others, his fat hands adorned with perfectly-fitting black kid gloves, softly patted each other, in token of the cultivated appreciation of a musical man. At such times, his oily murmur of approval, "Bravo! Bra-a-a!" hummed through the silence, like the purring of a great cat. His immediate neighbours on either side—hearty, ruddy-faced people from the country, basking amazedly in the sunshine of fashionable London—seeing and hearing him, began to follow his lead. Many a burst of applause from the pit, that night, started from the soft, comfortable patting of the black-gloved hands. The man's voracious vanity devoured this implied tribute to his local and critical supremacy, with an appearance of the highest relish. Smiles rippled continuously over his fat face. He looked about him, at the pauses in the music, serenely satisfied with himself and his fellow-creatures. "Yes! yes! these barbarous English people are learning something from me. Here, there, and everywhere, I—Fosco—am an influence that is felt, a Man who sits supreme!" If ever face spoke, his face spoke then—and that was its language.

The curtain fell on the first act; and the audience rose to look about them. This was the time I had waited for—the time to try if Pesca knew him.

He rose with the rest, and surveyed the occupants of the boxes grandly with his opera-glass. At first, his back was towards us; but he turned round, in time, to our side of the theatre, and looked at the boxes above us; using his glass for a few minutes—then removing it, but still continuing to look up. This was the moment I chose, when his full face was in view, for directing Pesca's attention to him.

"Do you know that man?" I asked.

"Which man, my friend?"

"The tall, fat man, standing there, with his face towards us."

Pesca raised himself on tiptoe, and looked at the Count.

"No," said the Professor. "The big fat man

is a stranger to me. Is he famous? Why do you point him out?"

"Because I have particular reasons for wishing to know something of him. He is a countryman of yours; his name is Count Fosco. Do you know that name?"

"Not I, Walter. Neither the name nor the man is known to me."

"Are you quite sure you don't recognise him? Look again; look carefully. I will tell you why I am so anxious about it, when we leave the theatre. Stop! let me help you up here, where you can see him better."

I helped the little man to perch himself on the edge of the raised dais upon which the pit-seats were all placed. Here, his small stature was no hindrance to him; here, he could see over the heads of the ladies who were seated near the outermost part of the bench. A slim, light-haired man, standing by us, whom I had not noticed before—a man with a scar on his left cheek—looked attentively at Pesca as I helped him up, and then looked still more attentively, following the direction of Pesca's eyes, at the Count. Our conversation might have reached his ears, and might, as it struck me, have roused his curiosity.

Meanwhile, Pesca fixed his eyes earnestly on the broad, full, smiling face, turned a little upward, exactly opposite to him.

"No," he said; "I have never set my two eyes on that big fat man before, in all my life."

As he spoke, the Count looked downwards towards the boxes behind us on the pit tier.

The eyes of the two Italians met.

The instant before, I had been perfectly satisfied, from his own reiterated assertion, that Pesca did not know the Count. The instant afterwards, I was equally certain that the Count knew Pesca!

Knew him; and—more surprising still—feared him as well! There was no mistaking the change that passed over the villain's face. The leaden hue that altered his yellow complexion in a moment, the sudden rigidity of all his features, the furtive scrutiny of his cold grey eyes, the motionless stillness of him from head to foot, told their own tale. A mortal dread had mastered him, body and soul—and his own recognition of Pesca was the cause of it!

The slim man, with the scar on his cheek, was still close by us. He had apparently drawn his inference from the effect produced on the Count by the sight of Pesca, as I had drawn mine. He was a mild gentlemanlike man, looking like a foreigner; and his interest in our proceedings was not expressed in anything approaching to an offensive manner.

For my own part, I was so startled by the change in the Count's face, so astounded at the entirely unexpected turn which events had taken, that I knew neither what to say or do next. Pesca roused me by stepping back to his former place at my side, and speaking first.

"How the fat man stares!" he exclaimed. "Is it at me? Am I famous? How can he know me, when I don't know him?"

I kept my eye still on the Count. I saw him

move for the first time when Pesca moved, so as not to lose sight of the little man, in the lower position in which he now stood. I was curious to see what would happen, if Pesca's attention, under these circumstances, was withdrawn from him; and I accordingly asked the Professor if he recognised any of his pupils, that evening, among the ladies in the boxes. Pesca immediately raised the large opera glass to his eyes, and moved it slowly all round the upper part of the theatre, searching for his pupils with the most conscientious scrutiny.

The moment he showed himself to be thus engaged, the Count turned round; slipped past the persons who occupied seats on the farther side of him from where we stood; and disappeared in the middle passage down the centre of the pit. I caught Pesca by the arm; and, to his inexpressible astonishment, hurried him round with me to the back of the pit, to intercept the Count before he could get to the door. Somewhat to my surprise, the slim man hastened out before us, avoiding a stoppage caused by some people on our side of the pit leaving their places, by which Pesca and myself were delayed. When we reached the lobby the Count had disappeared—and the foreigner with the scar was gone too.

"Come home," I said; "come home, Pesca, to your lodgings. I must speak to you in private—I must speak directly."

"My-soul-bless-my-soul!" cried the Professor, in a state of the extremest bewilderment. "What on earth is the matter?"

I walked on rapidly, without answering. The circumstances under which the Count had left the theatre suggested to me that his extraordinary anxiety to escape Pesca might carry him to further extremities still. He might escape me, too, by leaving London. I doubted the future, if I allowed him so much as a day's freedom to act as he pleased. And I doubted that foreign stranger who had got the start of us, and whom I suspected of intentionally following him out.

With this double distrust in my mind, I was not long in making Pesca understand what I wanted. As soon as we two were alone in his room, I increased his confusion and amazement a hundredfold by telling him what my purpose was, as plainly and unreservedly as I have acknowledged it here.

"My friend, what can I do?" cried the Professor, piteously appealing to me with both hands. "Dence-what-the-deuce! how can I help you, Walter, when I don't know the man?"

"He knows you—he is afraid of you—he has left the theatre to escape you. Pesca! there must be a reason for this. Look back into your own life, before you came to England. You left Italy, as you have told me yourself, for political reasons. You have never mentioned those reasons to me; and I don't inquire into them, now. I only ask you to consult your own recollections, and to say if they suggest no past cause for the terror which the first sight of you produced in that man."



To my unutterable surprise, these words, harmless as they appeared to me, produced the same astounding effect on Pesca which the sight of Pesca had produced on the Count. The rosy face of my little friend whitened in an instant; and he drew back from me slowly, trembling from head to foot.

"Walter!" he said. "You don't know what you ask."

He spoke in a whisper—he looked at me as if I had suddenly revealed to him some hidden danger to both of us. In less than one minute of time, he was so altered from the easy, lively, quaint little man of all my past experience, that if I had met him in the street, changed as I saw him now, I should most certainly not have known him again.

"Forgive me, if I have unintentionally pained and shocked you," I replied. "Remember the cruel wrong my wife has suffered at Count Fosco's hands. Remember that the wrong can never be redressed, unless the means are in my power of forcing him to do her justice. I spoke in *her* interests, Pesca—I ask you again to forgive me—I can say no more."

I rose to go. He stopped me before I reached the door.

"Wait," he said. "You have shaken me from head to foot. You don't know how I left my country, and why I left my country. Let me compose myself—let me think, if I can."

I returned to my chair. He walked up and down the room, talking to himself incoherently in his own language. After several turns backwards and forwards, he suddenly came up to me, and laid his little hands with a strange tenderness and solemnity on my breast.

"On your heart and soul, Walter," he said, "is there no other way to get to that man but the chance-way through me?"

"There is no other way," I answered.

He left me again; opened the door of the room and looked out cautiously into the passage; closed it once more; and came back.

"You won your right over me, Walter," he said, "on the day when you saved my life. It was yours from that moment, when you pleased to take it. Take it now. Yes! I mean what I say. My next words, as true as the good God is above us, will put my life into your hands."

The trembling earnestness with which he uttered this extraordinary warning, carried with it to my mind the conviction that he spoke the truth.

"Mind this!" he went on, shaking his hands at me in the vehemence of his agitation. "I hold no thread, in my own mind, between that man, Fosco, and the past time which I call back to me, for your sake. If you find the thread, keep it to yourself—tell me nothing—on my knees, I beg and pray, let me be ignorant, let me be innocent, let me be blind to all the future, as I am now!"

He said a few words more, hesitatingly and disconnectedly—then stopped again.

I saw that the effort of expressing himself in English, on an occasion too serious to permit

him the use of the quaint turns and phrases of his ordinary vocabulary, was painfully increasing the difficulty he had felt from the first in speaking to me at all. Having learnt to read and understand his native language (though not to speak it), in the earlier days of our intimate companionship, I now suggested to him that he should express himself in Italian, while I used English in putting any questions which might be necessary to my enlightenment. He accepted the proposal. In his own smooth-flowing language—spoken with a vehement agitation which betrayed itself in the perpetual working of his features, in the wildness and the suddenness of his foreign gesticulations, but never in the raising of his voice—I now heard the words which armed me to meet the last struggle that is left for this story to record.\*

"You know nothing of my motive for leaving Italy," he began, "except that it was for political reasons. If I had been driven to this country by the persecution of my government, I should not have kept those reasons a secret from you or from any one. I have concealed them because no government authority has pronounced the sentence of my exile. You have heard, Walter, of the political Societies that are hidden in every great city on the continent of Europe? To one of those Societies I belonged in Italy—and belong still, in England. When I came to this country, I came by the direction of my Chief. I was over-zealous, in my younger time; I ran the risk of compromising myself and others. For those reasons, I was ordered to emigrate to England, and to wait. I emigrated—I have waited—I wait, still. To-morrow, I may be called away: ten years hence, I may be called away. It is all one to me—I am here, I support myself by teaching, and I wait. I violate no oath (you shall hear why presently) in making my confidence complete by telling you the name of the Society to which I belong. All I do is to put my life in your hands. If what I say to you now is ever known by others to have passed my lips, as certainly as we two sit here, I am a dead man."

He whispered the next words in my ear. I keep the secret which he thus communicated. The Society to which he belonged, will be sufficiently individualised for the purpose of these pages, if I call it "The Brotherhood," on the few occasions when any reference to the subject will be needed in this place.

"The object of the Brotherhood," Pesca went on, "is, briefly, the object of other political societies of the same sort—the destruction of tyranny, and the assertion of the rights of the people. The principles of the Brotherhood are two. So long as a man's life is useful, or even harmless only, he has the right to enjoy it. But,

\* It is only right to mention, here, that I repeat Pesca's statement to me, with the careful suppressions and alterations which the serious nature of the subject and my own sense of duty to my friend demand. My first and last concealments from the reader are those which caution renders absolutely necessary in this portion of the narrative.



if his life inflicts injury on the well-being of his fellow-men, from that moment he forfeits the right, and it is not only no crime but a positive merit to deprive him of it. It is not for me to say in what frightful circumstances of oppression and suffering this Society took its rise. It is not for you to say—you Englishmen, who have conquered your freedom so long ago, that you have conveniently forgotten what blood you shed, and what extremities you proceeded to in the conquering—it is not for *you* to say how far the worst of all exasperations may, or may not, carry the maddened men of an enslaved nation. The iron that has entered into our souls has gone too deep for *you* to find it. Leave the refugee alone! Laugh at him, distrust him, open your eyes in wonder at that secret self which smoulders in him, sometimes under the every-day respectability and tranquillity of a man like me; sometimes under the grinding poverty, the fierce squalor, of men less lucky, less pliable, less patient than I am—but judge us not! In the time of your first Charles you might have done us justice; the long luxury of your own freedom has made you incapable of doing us justice now.”

All the deepest feelings of his nature seemed to force themselves to the surface in those words; all his heart was poured out to me, for the first time in our lives—but still, his voice never rose; still his dread of the terrible revelation he was making to me, never left him.

“So far,” he resumed, “you think the Society like other Societies. Its object (in your English opinion) is anarchy and revolution. It takes the life of a bad King or a bad Minister, as if the one and the other were dangerous wild beasts to be shot at the first opportunity. I grant you this. But the laws of the Brotherhood are the laws of no other political society on the face of the earth. The members are not known to one another. There is a President in Italy; there are Presidents abroad. Each of these has his Secretary. The Presidents and the Secretaries know the members; but the members, among themselves, are all strangers, until their Chiefs see fit, in the political necessity of the time, or in the private necessity of the society, to make them known to each other. With such a safeguard as this, there is no oath among us on admittance. We are identified with the Brotherhood by a secret mark, which we all bear, which lasts while our lives last. We are told to go about our ordinary business, and to report ourselves to the President, or the Secretary, four times a year, in the event of our services being required. We are warned, if we betray the Brotherhood, or if we injure it by serving other interests, that we die by the principles of the Brotherhood—die by the hand of a stranger who may be sent from the other end of the world to strike the blow—or by the hand of our own bosom-friend, who may have been a member unknown to us through all the years of our intimacy. Sometimes, the death is delayed; sometimes, it follows close on the treachery. It is our first business to know how

to wait—our second business to know how to obey when the word is spoken. Some of us may wait our lives through, and may not be wanted. Some of us may be called to the work, or to the preparation for the work, the very day of our admission. I myself—the little, easy, cheerful man you know, who, of his own accord, would hardly lift up his handkerchief to strike down the fly that buzzes about his face—I, in my younger time, under provocation so dreadful that I will not tell you of it, entered the Brotherhood by an impulse, as I might have killed myself by an impulse. I must remain in it, now—it has got me, whatever I may think of it in my better circumstances and my cooler manhood, to my dying day. While I was still in Italy, I was chosen Secretary; and all the members of that time, who were brought face to face with my President, were brought face to face also with *me*.”

I began to understand him; I saw the end towards which his extraordinary disclosure was now tending. He waited a moment, watching me earnestly—watching, till he had evidently guessed what was passing in my mind, before he resumed.

“You have drawn your own conclusion already,” he said. “I see it in your face. Tell me nothing; keep me out of the secret of your thoughts. Let me make my one last sacrifice of myself, for your sake—and then have done with this subject, never to return to it again.”

He signed to me not to answer him—rose—removed his coat—and rolled up the shirt-sleeve on his left arm.

“I promised you that this confidence should be complete,” he whispered, speaking close at my ear, with his eyes looking watchfully at the door. “Whatever comes of it, you shall not reproach me with having hidden anything from you which it was necessary to your interests to know. I have said that the Brotherhood identifies its members by a mark that lasts for life. See the place, and the mark on it, for yourself.”

He raised his bare arm, and showed me, high on the upper part of it and on the inner side, a brand deeply burnt in the flesh and stained of a bright blood-red colour. I abstain from describing the device which the brand represented. It will be sufficient to say that it was circular in form, and so small that it would have been completely covered by a shilling coin.

“A man who has this mark, branded in this place,” he said, covering his arm again, “is a member of the Brotherhood. A man who has been false to the Brotherhood is discovered, sooner or later, by the Chiefs who know him—Presidents or Secretaries, as the case may be. And a man discovered by the Chiefs is dead. *No human laws can protect him.* Remember what you have seen and heard; draw what conclusions you like; act as you please. But, in the name of God, whatever you discover, whatever you do, tell me nothing! Let me remain free from a responsibility which it horrifies me to think of—which I know, in my conscience, is not *my* responsibility, now. For the last time,

I say it—on my honour as a gentleman, on my oath as a Christian, if the man you pointed out at the Opera knows *me*, he is so altered, or so disguised, that I do not know *him*. I am ignorant of his proceedings or his purposes in England—I never saw him, I never heard his name, to my knowledge, before to-night. I say no more. Leave me a little, Walter: I am overpowered by what has happened; I am shaken by what I have said. Let me try to be like myself again, when we meet next."

He dropped into a chair; and, turning away from me, hid his face in his hands. I gently opened the door, so as not to disturb him—and spoke my few parting words in low tones, which he might hear or not, as he pleased.

"I will keep the memory of to-night in my heart of hearts," I said. "You shall never repent the trust you have reposed in me. May I come to you to-morrow? May I come as early as nine o'clock?"

"Yes, Walter," he replied, looking up at me kindly, and speaking in English once more, as if his one anxiety, now, was to get back to our former relations towards each other. "Come to my little bit of breakfast, before I go my ways among the pupils that I teach."

"Good night, Pesca."

"Good night, my friend."

#### TRIBES AND TONGUES.

It was the fancy of past generations to derive all languages from one common root, all races from one aboriginal man and woman. Then came sundry subdivisions, whose origin remained utterly unexplained, of which the great distinctions were white, yellow, red, brown, and black men, with skulls characteristic of each. As to idioms, a few were deemed the source and origin of all the rest.

Has such a theory any foundation in truth? Will it be confirmed by observation, by tradition, by history? Assuredly not. The better we are enabled to investigate through the past the means by which man holds, or has held, intercourse with man, the more varied, the less resembling one another, will the instruments of that intercourse be found. The tendency of time, of commerce and of civilisation is not to separate languages into many, but to fuse them into one. The languages of knowledge will as assuredly displace and supersede the languages of ignorance, as the superior races dispossess the inferior of their hold upon our common mother earth. The process is, in fact, identical. Imperfect idioms disappear with the beings that employ them; if they contain elements of strength and usefulness, those elements may indeed be preserved in the great transition that is going on. Languages, like other creations, have their progressive developments of improvement, but it is onward from something worse to something better. For ignorance is misty, clouded, complicated and obscure, as are the modes of expression by which it is represented; while knowledge is associated with clearness and simplicity, and conveys to others

the lucidity of its own conceptions in the most intelligible, appropriate and acceptable terms. We have not the same means of tracing the mutations of tongues which we possess for marking the different geological eras in the earth's structure, but we know enough and see enough to convince us that the same great law of improvement which is operating slowly and surely on the world of matter, is carrying on its not less important work on the world of mind.

We have not lost, we cannot lose, what antiquity possessed of excellence in the instruments of oral or written communication. The ancient Greek, Latin, Sanscrit and Chinese have left indelible marks on the existing languages of civilisation, but of the hundred, thousand, perhaps ten thousand, jargons which were employed by the rude tribes of remote times, no fragment, no record remains. Of the old Gothic, Scandinavian and Slavonic we find, pervading their derivatives, an impress which represents the better and sounder portions of their earlier forms; but of the idioms disassociated from traditional or historical compositions—from verse, or music, or any other representative of intellectual culture—of these, little or nothing is to be traced, and by them little or nothing could be taught.

The evidence of the very remote civilisation of the Chinese is of the most satisfactory character. Whatever was written in Chinese symbols four thousand years ago is understood now by one third of the human race. How many are there living at the present time who are able to enjoy the original writings of Homer or Herodotus? How many can master a Hebrew text? How many read the Shaster? But those who are now engaged in studying the works of Confucius in the very characters which he employed, may be reckoned by hundreds of millions. Time-changing habits and new necessities have no doubt greatly added to the number of these characters, and the great master, if now living, would not be able to interpret an imperial rescript, nor examine the paper of a modern candidate for literary honours. Yet all that the sage wrote and which is preserved, is intelligible, and is the substructure of the most widely extended influence in the world of letters existing at the present hour.

The fusion of languages is one of the most striking evidences of progression; the absorption of dialects by the Latin, about the Christian era, gave a great impulse to civilisation. It is by superior instruments of intercourse that the more cultivated prevail over the less cultivated races. Imperfect and insufficient idioms are replaced by those which best supply the intellectual wants of society. In these islands the various Celtic dialects, which furnish no adequate expressions for philosophical science, disappear in the presence of our nobler English tongue, with its strong Saxon and Norman roots, which have intertwined themselves with so many classical auxiliaries, its multifarious branches stretching out to seek and find new forms and phrases suited to the progress of

inquiry and the development of mind. Great Britain—mother country and colonies—will, in a few generations, have but one language. The dialects of France are disappearing; so are those of Italy. German literature is now only represented by the Saxon tongue. The Castilian is driving all the provincial idioms of Spain from the field. The Russian, in the course of centuries, will, probably, alone occupy the Slavonian field. Hundreds upon hundreds of aboriginal tongues have disappeared before the presence of the Saxon and the Spanish races. As the larger water-drops attract, absorb, and combine with the lesser, the languages of commerce and civilisation will, in progress of time, take possession of the whole social field, but rescuing and appropriating whatever is valuable in the instruments of communication they displace. The languages of future ages will be enriched out of the spoils of the present and the past; but of those now spoken the greater part are destined to decay and to disappear.

Little more than a generation has passed since the Adelungs published their *Mithridates* and the Catalogues of known languages, which amount to several thousand. These are works of great industry, but very incomplete, and altogether insufficient to give a correct idea of the multitudinous forms of speech which have been invented by gregarious man. Imperfect as is the list, many of the idioms of which some account is given are no longer existent.

When the study of language is entered on, the first impulse is to seek resemblances and affinities; but, as the field of observation is extended, one is more and more struck with the wonderful dissimilarities, the absence of links of connexion, the radical differences in words, in grammatical construction, in all that can be said to give to languages their peculiar character. Take any two portions of the globe of which it can be certainly said the inhabitants have never interchanged a thought—take for an example a sentence from the idiom of an aboriginal tribe of central Africa, compare it with one conveying the same meaning from central America, or central Asia, and you will be amazed with the extraordinary unlikeness in the sound, the arrangements, the number of words employed for giving expression to the same idea. What marvellous contrasts between the polysyllabic languages of more than half the world, and the monosyllabic languages of nearly the other half. Explain—but you cannot explain—how some nations revel in words of enormous length, and make every modification of time, place, or circumstance an instrument for adding new elongations to what is already intolerably long, and complicating the complicated with new complications, while in others not a word is to be found exceeding a single syllable.

Not long ago I had an opportunity of watching some of the phases by which the feeble idioms die out, to be replaced by what is stronger and more available for the purposes of daily life. In the Philippine Islands there exist some forty or fifty *vocabularies* of Indian

tongues, mostly collected by the friars for facilitating the main object of their missions—the conversion of the heathen to Catholicism. At the present time two native languages, the Tagal and the Bisayan, are gradually invading and absorbing the many native dialects which are or were used among the aboriginal tribes; while the Castilian, which, of course, represents the highest civilisation, is, in its turn, intruding on the Bisayan and the Tagal. It may be laid down as a guiding and positive fact that where there has been no communication between human beings, there will be no resemblance, no affinity, in the various modes by which expression is given to thought or feeling. Non-intercourse makes men alien to one another, by denying to them the means of mutual intercourse. There are in the lower regions of savage life, spoken only by very small groups of mankind, hundreds of idioms of which every century sweeps away the traces. Where wants are few, words will not be many. There are tribes whose numerals only go out as far as one, two, and three, at which point language fails; and *four*, *many*, *incalculable multitudes* are represented by the same word and confounded in the same idea. Where the savage neither cooks his food, but lives solely on wild fruits, roots, or grubs; where he neither clothes nor ornaments his person, but wanders about in primitive nakedness; where he builds for himself no habitation, but, like any other brute animal, seeks shelter in the shades of the forest, or the caves of the mountain, or holes in the ground; where the seasons to his narrow intellect are only represented by the transitions of light and darkness, heat and cold, a very small vocabulary will suffice; but when, either from the visits of neighbours less savage than himself, or his personal wanderings into localities more advanced than his own, something is presented to his senses which becomes an object of desire, that object, which has no name in his own rude jargon, will be represented by the word which he first hears attached to it, and in this simple way the groundwork is laid for the extension of one and the exclusion of another idiom. Again, the savage sees what he had never seen before, the smoking of tobacco. He imitates the smoker—the sensation is pleasurable—a want is awakened. How can he obtain the tobacco? He must give something for it, something that he can himself provide. Then comes the idea of barter, of value. One, two, three, much, many, are insufficient for effecting the exchange; so he finds four, five, six, and so forth, necessary terms, and he learns them, and they become part of his stock of words; but as he finds his own words, one, two, three, &c., will not serve him in his negotiations, he adopts the words of corresponding meaning, which are understood by the seller of the tobacco; and thus it is that similar sounds representing numerals are more widely spread than any other part of the vocabulary. The name *tobacco* is in itself an example of the association of new words with new



wants; it has found its way, with very slight modifications, into all the languages of Europe, and into many of the Oriental world.

I remember to have heard from Bishop Grégoire (who, during his life, was the object of most cruel and undeserved calumny, and who, since his death, has not been honoured as one so wise and good deserved to be\*) that when the first National Assembly met, at the beginning of the Revolution, it was found that of the whole people no more than seven millions spoke or understood the French language, the language of cultivated and literary men. The Bas Breton in Bretagne, the Basque and Béarnais along the Western Pyrenees, the Gascon throughout the regions of the Landes, the Languedocian and Provençal in South-Eastern Gaul, to say nothing of many dialects more confined and local, formed the idioms of the vast majority of the nation. In all the great towns and cities, no doubt, the aristocracy understood and spoke (but often imperfectly) what Chaucer calls the "French of Paris;" Chaucer does not say what was the "French of Stratford atte Bowe," but we may be assured in his days pure Parisian French was of rare acquirement. Attempts have been made to legitimatise the grammar, to revive the literature, to secure the permanence of the provincial dialects of France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, but the sentence of extinction is pronounced against them, they move slowly, but most certainly, towards their destined tombs, and, in a few generations, will all be registered among the dead. At the present hour, the number of persons in the French empire who speak the provincial dialects and do not understand French, is not greater than the number of those who half a century ago used classical French as their habitual language. Every now and then a spark of vitality breaks out, generally under poetical inspiration—for France has its *Jasmin* as Scotland her Burns—and a village bard is borne aloft by provincial enthusiasm; but the field of influence is narrower, and narrowing every day, the number of listeners diminishes hour by hour, and the only hope of immortality must be in some future Raynouard or Fauriel, who may be engaged in literary gleanings up of "things that were" but have ceased to be.

In our own islands, a hundred and fifty years ago, six separate languages were spoken, to say nothing of what are called provincial dialects—six languages so distinct that the speakers of any one of them would be unintelligible to the rest; these were the modern English, the Gaelic, the Erse, the Welsh, the Manx, and the old British,

\* No more energetic, no more persistent, no more eloquent advocate of negro emancipation ever appeared than was the Abbé Grégoire. I do not know what became of the curious library of books which he collected, written by men and women of black African race. They amounted to many hundreds of volumes. When such trouble and expense were employed in gathering together so many specimens of negro intellect, it would be sad to learn that they had been dispersed for the want of some congenial spirit to sympathise with, and carry forward, the good bishop's labour of love.

which was only preserved in some parts of Cornwall, but has now wholly disappeared; the last person who spoke it—her name was Dolly Penreath—died at the end of the expired century. At the beginning of the present, the Manx was generally understood through the Isle of Man, and was used in the Church services of many of the districts remote from the larger towns. I believe a Manx sermon is now seldom heard, and though the language is still employed in some official formulæ of the Tynwald (or ancient court) in the same manner as, in our Parliamentary proceedings, *la Reine le veult* is still the Norman form in which the royal assent is given to an act of Parliament—the ancient idiom of Mona is very near extinction.

The same process is going on with the Welsh. Within the memory of man, it was the language of many market towns, where not a single Cambrian word can now be heard. It is retreating more and more from the busy world to secluded rural districts. Its value, both social and commercial, is constantly diminishing, and it palls in the presence of the sturdier Anglo-Saxon tongue. The difficulty of making it the medium for conveying the advanced knowledge of the time is pretty generally acknowledged. It has brought to literature no valuable contributions of its own. Nothing but curiosity excites an Englishman to study Welsh, while a hundred motives encourage the Welshman to become master of English. For the English opens the door to preferment; it enables the Cymry to start fair with the Sassenach. A Welshman, ignorant of English, will not get into Parliament, he will hardly be made a Justice of the Peace; it may be doubted if he could obtain an appointment as an officer of the excise or customs. The Welshman, like all of the Celtic races, is slow to move, but he moves, notwithstanding. He wrestles against change, but change is too strong even for Cambrian nationality, which is strong in its way, and obstinate into the bargain. How long is the tongue of Taliessin likely to live? The electric telegraph, railways, penny postage, have pronounced its doom. These, and other such mighty ones, repudiate alliances with anything that is backward or retardatory. They are the children of progress, and hold in due reverence their omnipotent sire. Their diplomacy is all carried on in the language of high and advancing civilisation.

There is one mode of dealing with decaying languages which has often succeeded in giving them vitality—persecution. Toleration, emancipation, liberty, conceded to dissenters, brought many of them within the pale of orthodox profession, many who had spurned conformity while non-conformity was visited with disability and disgrace. Pride would not consent to a surrender which implied a recognition of superiority. So a government that wants to give new stamina and firmer roots to a language, had best begin by discouraging, and finish by punishing, those who employ it. The German had been quietly treading on the heels of the Magyar; the Russian had been undermining



the Polish; but the impatience of emperors and tzars could only be satisfied by edicts, whose object was the more speedy extirpation of these national emblems. Then it was that the Hungarian and the Polish mothers pressed their infants more warmly to their bosoms, and whispered with sweeter and more emphatic eloquence the mother tongue into the ears of the child. This was an influence no despotism could reach, a right against whose exercise no tyranny could avail. The banned languages waxed stronger because they were bathed in the waters of adversity, and the violence with which it was endeavoured to break the bonds only bound and riveted them more tightly and more lastingly.

The current opinions with regard to the origin and dispersion of races and languages are alike unobservant, unphilosophical, and unfounded. It is a sound as well as an ancient doctrine that we ought to reason from the known to the unknown, in other words to build, if possible, our theories upon the solid foundation of knowledge and experience, and not upon the shifting sands of uncertainty or paradox. But, instead of reasoning from the present, which is clear, up to the past, which is obscure, most writers on Tribes and Tongues have chosen to take their departure from the darkness of departed days, and thence, with some preconceived theory—generally a current common-place—to grope their way through twilight into light. If, starting from the fields of observation which now surround us, we would take the torches of present positive knowledge to illuminate the mistiness of "*auld lang syne*," we should assuredly not so often lose our way in hunting those Wills-o'-the-wisp, which may be amusing enough, but are more treacherous than amusing.

For an example. By far the greatest, the most compact, the most peculiar, the most self-resembling, the most national of all the peoples of the world, is the Chinese people. They comprise certainly more than one-third of the whole human race. We have very lately obtained censuses of the population from independent sources, and we may with tolerable certainty aver that the Chinese empire contains about four hundred and thirteen millions. Surely a little reflection would teach us that such a multitudinous nation was likely to have an origin of its own, to be descended from the aboriginal possessors of the soil, and rather to have given character to, than have received an impress from, the neighbouring nations. We know that at the present hour, tens of thousands—nay, millions—of Chinese migrate to every part of the Oriental world. We find them everywhere in the East, mingling with and modifying the native races, and producing the most marvellous changes in the physical, phrenological and physiognomical character of man. Yet what absurd fancies have been circulated as to the ancient races of China, what they were, and whence they came. The Jesuits would have it that they descended from a Hebrew colony, and that we were to look to Judæa as the cradle of the Chinese people. Sir William Jones

believed that they emanated from Hindoo tribes who wandered from India to the Flowery Land. More than one writer insists that they came from the red people of Western America; nay, I have lately seen a speculation that they are of Cambrian origin, a Welsh woman having declared on a visit to Canton that she both understood and was understood by the Chinese people, so many of the words were Welsh. But the most accepted, and the least irrational supposition is, that the Chinese nation has for its ancestry the Manchurian races, who, marching as emigrants, are supposed most naturally to march, towards the rising sun, found the fertile fields of China more attractive than the snowy steppes or the misty mountains of their primitive abodes.

There is no satisfactory authority for any of these surmises. The Tartar tribes, no doubt, Manchus and Moguls, have made their way into China, conquerors in war, settlers in peace. They have established dynasties, possessed themselves of the powers of government, yet they remain from the Chinese multitude nearly as distinguishable and as separate now as at the first moment of their intrusion. In the great cities they occupy separate quarters; scarcely a word of their language has found its way into Chinese conversation or into Chinese books. Their numbers have been calculated at from eight to ten millions. It is probable that much more than half of that estimate have melted into the four hundred millions of the Chinese, having forgotten their own dialects, and lost their distinguishing characteristics. And what we can ascertain to be passing now, we may safely suppose to have occurred in remoter times. History is generally a repetition of itself; and there is profound wisdom in the axiom that there is nothing really new under the sun. The study of what *is*—and we stand on safe ground when engaged in that study—will be our best guide to the knowledge of what *was*.

#### FAIRIES AND FLOWERS.

CHILDREN who gather common flowers at will,  
And leave them, withering, on the path to lie,  
Dream not that sprites, in pain, cling to them still,  
And cannot wander till the moon is high;  
When evening's hush is felt on hill and dell,  
The fairies of all flowers round them meet,  
And charm the night with tones ineffable,  
And circle o'er the grass with glimmering feet.

The fairies gathered round, with pity view  
The broken flowers lying helplessly,  
And trick out the crushed leaves with diamond dew;  
But when the moon is high, the sprites are free.  
These, long unhappy, now at freedom set,  
Yet linger for a moment quite forlorn,  
Droop o'er their faded flowers with regret,  
Then fly to find new homes before the morn.

Good fairies guard and guide them through the night,  
To waiting buds these lonely sprites they bring,  
And to the beauty yet concealed from sight,  
Link them by magic of their wondrous ring;

The light flows round them with a happy tune,  
While the uniting charm is made complete  
With hands thrice waved towards the setting moon,  
And the buds ope to give us flowers sweet.

## HUNTED DOWN.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

IN TWO PORTIONS. PORTION THE SECOND.

### IV.

FOR six or seven months, I saw no more of Mr. Slinkton. He called once at my house, but I was not at home; and he once asked me to dine with him in the Temple, but I was engaged. His friend's Assurance was effected in March. Late in September or early in October, I was down at Scarborough for a breath of sea air, where I met him on the beach. It was a hot evening; he came towards me with his hat in his hand; and there was the walk I had felt so strongly disinclined to take, in perfect order again, exactly in front of the bridge of my nose.

He was not alone; he had a young lady on his arm. She was dressed in mourning, and I looked at her with great interest. She had the appearance of being extremely delicate, and her face was remarkably pale and melancholy; but she was very pretty. He introduced her, as his niece, Miss Niner.

"Are you strolling, Mr. Sampson? Is it possible you can be idle?"

It *was* possible, and I *was* strolling.

"Shall we stroll together?"

"With pleasure."

The young lady walked between us, and we walked on the cool sea sand in the direction of Filey.

"There have been wheels here," said Mr. Slinkton. "And now I look again, the wheels of a hand-carriage! Margaret, my love, your shadow, without doubt!"

"Miss Niner's shadow?" I repeated, looking down at it on the sand.

"Not that one," Mr. Slinkton returned, laughing. "Margaret, my dear, tell Mr. Sampson."

"Indeed," said the young lady, turning to me, "there is nothing to tell—except that I constantly see the same invalid old gentleman, at all times, wherever I go. I have mentioned it to my uncle, and he calls the gentleman my shadow."

"Does he live in Scarborough?" I asked.

"He is staying here."

"Do you live in Scarborough?"

"No, I am staying here. My uncle has placed me with a family here, for my health."

"And your shadow?" said I, smiling.

"My shadow," she answered, smiling too, "is—like myself—not very robust, I fear; for, I lose my shadow sometimes, as my shadow loses me at other times. We both seem liable to confinement to the house. I have not seen my shadow for days and days; but it does oddly happen, occasionally, that wherever I go, for many days together, this gentleman goes. We

have come together in the most unfrequented nooks on this shore."

"Is this he?" said I, pointing before us.

The wheels had swept down to the water's edge, and described a great loop on the sand in turning. Bringing the loop back towards us, and spinning it out as it came, was a hand-carriage drawn by a man.

"Yes," said Miss Niner, "this really is my shadow, uncle!"

As the carriage approached us and we approached the carriage, I saw within it an old man, whose head was sunk on his breast, and who was enveloped in a variety of wrappers. He was drawn by a very quiet but very keen-looking man, with iron-grey hair, who was slightly lame. They had passed us, when the carriage stopped, and the old gentleman within putting out his arm, called to me by my name. I went back, and was absent from Mr. Slinkton and his niece for about five minutes.

When I rejoined them, Mr. Slinkton was the first to speak. Indeed, he said to me in a raised voice before I came up with him: "It is well you have not been longer, or my niece might have died of curiosity to know who her shadow is, Mr. Sampson."

"An old East India Director," said I. "An intimate friend of our friend's at whose house I first had the pleasure of meeting you. A certain Major Banks. You have heard of him?"

"Never."

"Very rich, Miss Niner; but very old, and very crippled. An amiable man—sensible—much interested in you. He has just been expatiating on the affection that he has observed to exist between you and your uncle."

Mr. Slinkton was holding his hat again, and he passed his hand up the straight walk, as if he himself went up it serenely, after me.

"Mr. Sampson," he said, tenderly pressing his niece's arm in his, "our affection was always a strong one, for we have had but few near ties. We have still fewer now. We have associations to bring us together, that are not of this world, Margaret."

"Dear uncle!" murmured the young lady, and turned her face aside to hide her tears.

"My niece and I have such remembrances and regrets in common, Mr. Sampson," he feelingly pursued, "that it would be strange indeed if the relations between us were cold or indifferent. If you remember a conversation you and I once had together, you will understand the reference I make. Cheer up, dear Margaret, Don't droop, don't droop. My Margaret! I cannot bear to see you droop!"

The poor young lady was very much affected, but controlled herself. His feelings, too, were very acute. In a word, he found himself under such great need of a restorative, that he presently went away, to take a bath of sea water; leaving the young lady and me sitting on a point of rock, and probably presuming—but, that, you will say, was a pardonable indulgence in a luxury—that she would praise him with all her heart.

She did, poor thing. With all her confiding heart, she praised him to me, for his care of her dead sister, and for his untiring devotion in her last illness. The sister had wasted away very slowly, and wild and terrible fantasies had come over her towards the end; but he had never been impatient with her, or at a loss; had always been gentle, watchful, and self-possessed. The sister had known him, and she knew him, to be the best of men, the kindest of men, and yet a man of such admirable strength of character, as to be a very tower for the support of their weak natures while their poor lives endured.

"I shall leave him, Mr. Sampson, very soon," said the young lady; "I know my life is drawing to an end; and when I am gone, I hope he will marry and be happy. I am sure he has lived single so long, only for my sake, and for my poor poor sister's."

The little hand-carriage had made another great loop on the damp sand, and was coming back again, gradually spinning out a slim figure of eight, half a mile long.

"Young lady," said I, looking around, laying my hand upon her arm, and speaking in a low voice; "time presses. You hear the gentle murmur of that sea?"

She looked at me with the utmost wonder and alarm, saying, "Yes!"

"And you know what a voice is in it when the storm comes?"

"Yes!"

"You see how quiet and peaceful it lies before us, and you know what an awful sight of power without pity it might be, this very night?"

"Yes!"

"But if you had never heard or seen it, or heard of it, in its cruelty, could you believe that it beats every inanimate thing in its way to pieces, without mercy, and destroys life without remorse?"

"You terrify me, sir, by these questions!"

"To save you, young lady, to save you! For God's sake, collect your strength and collect your firmness! If you were here alone, and hemmed in by the rising tide on the flow to fifty feet above your head, you could not be in greater danger than the danger you are now to be saved from."

The figure on the sand was spun out, and straggled off into a crooked little jerk that ended at the cliff very near us.

"As I am, before Heaven and the Judge of all mankind, your friend, and your dead sister's friend, I solemnly entreat you, Miss Niner, without one moment's loss of time, to come to this gentleman with me!"

If the little carriage had been less near to us, I doubt if I could have got her away; but, it was so near, that we were there, before she had recovered the hurry of being urged from the rock. I did not remain there with her, two minutes. Certainly within five, I had the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing her—from the point we had sat on, and to which I had returned—half supported and half carried up

some rude steps notched in the cliff, by the figure of an active man. With that figure beside her, I knew she was safe anywhere.

I sat alone on the rock, awaiting Mr. Slinkton's return. The twilight was deepening and the shadows were heavy, when he came round the point, with his hat hanging at his button-hole, smoothing his wet hair with one of his hands, and picking out the old path with the other and a pocket-comb.

"My niece not here, Mr. Sampson?" he said, looking about.

"Miss Niner seemed to feel a chill in the air after the sun was down, and has gone home."

He looked surprised, as though she were not accustomed to do anything without him: even to originate so slight a proceeding. "I persuaded Miss Niner," I explained.

"Ah!" said he. "She is easily persuaded—for her good. Thank you, Mr. Sampson; she is better within doors. The bathing-place was further than I thought, to say the truth."

"Miss Niner is very delicate," I observed.

He shook his head and drew a deep sigh. "Very, very, very. You may recollect my saying so? The time that has since intervened, has not strengthened her. The gloomy shadow that fell upon her sister so early in life, seems, in my anxious eyes, to gather over her too, ever darker, ever darker. Dear Margaret, dear Margaret! But we must hope."

The hand-carriage was spinning away before us, at a most indecorous pace for an invalid vehicle, and was making most irregular curves upon the sand. Mr. Slinkton, noticing it after he had put his handkerchief to his eyes, said:

"If I may judge from appearances, your friend will be upset, Mr. Sampson."

"It looks probable, certainly," said I.

"The servant must be drunk."

"The servants of old gentlemen will get drunk sometimes," said I.

"The major draws very light, Mr. Sampson."

"The major does draw light," said I.

By this time, the carriage, much to my relief, was lost in the darkness. We walked on for a little, side by side over the sand, in silence. After a short while he said, in a voice still affected by the emotion that his niece's state of health had awakened in him:

"Do you stay here long, Mr. Sampson?"

"Why, no. I am going away to-night."

"So soon? But, business always holds you in request. Men like Mr. Sampson are too important to others, to be spared to their own need of relaxation and enjoyment."

"I don't know about that," said I. "However, I am going back."

"To London?"

"To London."

"I shall be there too, soon after you."

I knew that, as well as he did. But, I did not tell him so. Any more than I told him what defensive weapon my right hand rested on in my pocket, as I walked by his side. Any more than I told him why I did not walk on the sea-side of him, with the night closing in.

We left the beach, and our ways diverged. We exchanged Good night, and had parted indeed, when he said, returning:

"Mr. Sampson, *may* I ask? Poor Meltham, whom we spoke of.—Dead yet?"

"Not when I last heard of him; but too broken a man to live long, and hopelessly lost to his old calling."

"Dear, dear, dear!" said he, with great feeling. "Sad, sad, sad! The world is a grave!" And so went his way.

It was not his fault if the world were not a grave; but, I did not call that observation after him, any more than I had mentioned those other things just now enumerated. He went his way, and I went mine with all expedition. This happened, as I have said, either at the end of September or beginning of October. The next time I saw him, and the last time, was late in November.

## V.

I HAD A VERY particular engagement, to breakfast in the Temple. It was a bitter northeasterly morning, and the sleet and slush lay inches deep in the streets. I could get no conveyance, and was soon wet to the knees; but I should have been true to that appointment though I had had to wade to it, up to my neck in the same impediments.

The appointment took me to some chambers in the Temple. They were at the top of a lonely corner house overlooking the river. The name MR. ALFRED BECKWITH was painted on the outer door. On the door opposite, on the same landing, the name MR. JULIUS SLINKTON. The doors of both sets of chambers stood open, so that anything said aloud in one set, could be heard in the other.

I had never been in those chambers before. They were dismal, close, unwholesome, and oppressive; the furniture, originally good, and not yet old, was faded and dirty; the rooms were in great disorder; there was a strong pervading smell of opium, brandy, and tobacco; the grate and fire-irons were splashed all over, with unsightly blotches of rust; and on a sofa by the fire, in the room where breakfast had been prepared, lay the host, Mr. Beckwith: a man with all the appearances upon him of the worst kind of drunkard, very far advanced upon his shameful way to death.

"Slinkton is not come yet," said this creature, staggering up when I went in; "I'll call him. Halloa! Julius Cæsar! Come and drink!" As he hoarsely roared this out, he beat the poker and tongs together in a mad way, as if that were his usual manner of summoning his associate.

The voice of Mr. Slinkton was heard through the clatter, from the opposite side of the staircase, and he came in. He had not expected the pleasure of meeting me. I have seen several artful men brought to a stand, but I never saw a man so aghast as he was when his eyes rested on mine.

"Julius Cæsar," cried Beckwith, staggering between us, "Mist' Sampson! Mist' Sampson,

Julius Cæsar! Julius, Mist' Sampson, is the friend of my soul. Julius keeps me plied with liquor, morning, noon, and night. Julius is a real benefactor. Julius threw the tea and coffee out of window when I used to have any. Julius empties all the water jugs of their contents, and fills 'em with spirits. Julius winds me up and keeps me going. Boil the brandy, Julius!"

There was a rusty and furred saucepan in the ashes—the ashes looked like the accumulation of weeks—and Beckwith, rolling and staggering between us as if he were going to plunge headlong into the fire, got the saucepan out, and tried to force it into Slinkton's hand.

"Boil the brandy, Julius Cæsar! Come! Do your usual office. Boil the brandy!"

He became so fierce in his gesticulations with the saucepan, that I expected to see him lay open Slinkton's head with it. I therefore put out my hand to check him. He reeled back to the sofa, and sat there, panting, shaking, and red-eyed, in his rags of dressing-gown, looking at us both. I noticed then, that there was nothing to drink on the table but brandy, and nothing to eat but salted herrings, and a hot, sickly, highly-peppered stew.

"At all events, Mr. Sampson," said Slinkton, offering me the smooth gravel path for the last time, "I thank you for interfering between me and this unfortunate man's violence. However you came here, Mr. Sampson, or with whatever motive you came here, at least I thank you for that."

"Boil the brandy!" muttered Beckwith.

Without gratifying his desire to know how I came there, I said, quietly, "How is your niece, Mr. Slinkton?"

He looked hard at me, and I looked hard at him.

"I am sorry to say, Mr. Sampson, that my niece has proved treacherous and ungrateful to her best friend. She left me, without a word of notice or explanation. She was misled, no doubt, by some designing rascal. Perhaps you may have heard of it?"

"I did hear that she was misled by a designing rascal. In fact, I have proof of it."

"Are you sure of it?" said he.

"Quite."

"Boil the brandy!" muttered Beckwith.

"Company to breakfast, Julius Cæsar! Do your usual office—provide the usual breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper—boil the brandy!"

The eyes of Slinkton looked from him to me, and he said, after a moment's consideration:

"Mr. Sampson, you are a man of the world, and so am I. I will be plain with you."

"Oh, no, you won't," said I, shaking my head.

"I tell you, sir, I will be plain with you."

"And I tell you, you will not," said I. "I know all about you. *You* plain with any one? Nonsense, nonsense!"

"I plainly tell you, Mr. Sampson," he went on, with a manner almost composed, "that I understand your object. You want to save your



funds, and escape from your liabilities; these are old tricks of trade with you Office-gentlemen. But you will not do it, sir: you will not succeed. You have not an easy adversary to play against, when you play against me. We shall have to inquire, in due time, when and how Mr. Beckwith fell into his present habits. With that remark, sir, I put this poor creature and his incoherent wanderings of speech, aside, and wish you a good morning and a better case next time."

While he was saying this, Beckwith had filled a half-pint glass with brandy. At this moment, he threw the brandy at his face, and threw the glass after it. Slinkton put his hands up, half blinded with the spirit, and cut with the glass across the forehead. At the sound of the breakage, a fourth person came into the room, closed the door, and stood at it. He was a very quiet but very keen looking man, with iron-grey hair, and slightly lame.

Slinkton pulled out his handkerchief, assuaged the pain in his smarting eyes, and dabbed the blood on his forehead. He was a long time about it, and I saw that, in the doing of it, a tremendous change came over him, occasioned by the change in Beckwith—who ceased to pant and tremble, sat upright, and never took his eyes off him. I never in my life saw a face in which abhorrence and determination were so forcibly painted, as in Beckwith's then.

"Look at me, you villain," said Beckwith, "and see me as I really am. I took these rooms, to make them a trap for you. I came into them as a drunkard, to bait the trap for you. You fell into the trap, and you will never leave it alive. On the morning when you last went to Mr. Sampson's office, I had seen him first. Your plot has been known to both of us, all along, and you have been counterplotted all along. What? Having been cajoled into putting that prize of two thousand pounds in your power, I was to be done to death with brandy, and, brandy not proving quick enough, with something quicker? Have I never seen you, when you thought my senses gone, pouring from your little bottle into my glass? Why, you Murderer and Forger, alone here with you in the dead of the night, as I have so often been, I have had my hand upon the trigger of a pistol, twenty times, to blow your brains out!"

This sudden starting up of the thing that he had supposed to be his imbecile victim, into a determined man, with a settled resolution to hunt him down and be the death of him mercilessly expressed from head to foot, was, in the first shock, too much for him. Without any figure of speech, he staggered under it. But, there is no greater mistake than to suppose, that a man who is a calculating criminal, is, in any phase of his guilt, otherwise than true to himself and perfectly consistent with his whole character. Such a man commits murder, and murder is the natural culmination of his course; such a man has to outface murder, and he will do it with hardihood and effrontery. It is a sort of fashion to express surprise that any notorious

criminal, having such crime upon his conscience, can so brave it out. Do you think that if he had it on his conscience, or had a conscience to have it upon, he would ever have committed the crime?

Perfectly consistent with himself, as I believe all such monsters to be, this Slinkton recovered himself, and showed a defiance that was sufficiently cold and quiet. He was white, he was haggard, he was changed; but, only as a sharper who had played for a great stake, and had been outwitted and had lost the game.

"Listen to me, you villain," said Beckwith, "and let every word you hear me say, be a stab in your wicked heart. When I took these rooms, to throw myself in your way and lead you on to the scheme which I knew my appearance and supposed character and habits would suggest to such a devil, how did I know that? Because you were no stranger to me. I knew you well. And I knew you to be the cruel wretch who, for so much money, had killed one innocent girl while she trusted him implicitly, and who was, by inches, killing another."

Slinkton took out a snuff-box, took a pinch of snuff, and laughed.

"But, see here," said Beckwith, never looking away, never raising his voice, never relaxing his face, never unclenching his hand. "See what a dull wolf you have been, after all! The infatuated drunkard who never drank a fiftieth part of the liquor you plied him with, but poured it away, here, there, everywhere, almost before your eyes—who bought over the fellow you set to watch him and to ply him, by outbidding you in his bribe, before he had been at his work three days—with whom you have observed no caution, yet who was so bent on ridding the earth of you as a wild beast, that he would have defeated you if you had been ever so prudent—that drunkard whom you have many a time left on the floor of this room, and who has even let you go out of it, alive and undeceived, when you have turned him over with your foot—has, almost as often, on the same night, within an hour, within a few minutes, watched you awake, had his hand at your pillow when you were asleep, turned over your papers, taken samples from your bottles and packets of powder, changed their contents, rifled every secret of your life!"

He had had another pinch of snuff in his hand, but had gradually let it drop from between his fingers to the floor, where he now smoothed it out with his foot, looking down at it the while.

"That drunkard," said Beckwith, "who had free access to your rooms at all times, that he might drink the strong drinks you left in his way and be the sooner ended, holding no more terms with you than he would hold with a tiger, has had his master-key for all your locks, his test for all your poisons, his clue to your cipher writing. He can tell you, as well as you can tell him, how long it took to complete that deed, what doses there were, what intervals, what signs of gradual decay upon mind and body, what distempered fancies were produced, what observable changes, what physical pain.

He can tell you, as well as you can tell him, that all this was recorded day by day, as a lesson of experience for future service. He can tell you, better than you can tell him, where that journal is at this moment."

Slinkton stopped the action of his foot, and looked at Beckwith.

"No," said the latter, as if answering a question from him. "Not in the drawer of the writing-desk that opens with the spring; it is not there, and it never will be there again."

"Then you are a thief!" said Slinkton.

Without any change whatever in the inflexible purpose which it was quite terrific even to me to contemplate, and from the power of which I had all along felt convinced it was impossible for this wretch to escape, Beckwith returned:

"And I am your niece's shadow, too."

With an imprecation, Slinkton put his hand to his head, tore out some hair, and flung it on the ground. It was the end of the smooth walk; he destroyed it in the action, and it will soon be seen that his use for it was past.

Beckwith went on: "Whenever you left here, I left here. Although I understood that you found it necessary to pause in the completion of that purpose, to avert suspicion, still I watched you close, with the poor confiding girl. When I had your diary, and could read it word by word—it was only about the night before your last visit to Scarborough—you remember the night? you slept with a small flat phial tied to your wrist—I sent to Mr. Sampson, who was kept out of view. This is Mr. Sampson's trusty servant standing by the door. We three saved your niece among us."

Slinkton looked at us all, took an uncertain step or two from the place where he had stood, returned to it, and glanced about him in a very curious way—as one of the meaner reptiles might, when looking for a hole to hide in. I noticed at the same time, that a singular change took place in the figure of the man—as if he collapsed within his clothes, and they consequently became ill-shaped and ill-fitting.

"You shall know," said Beckwith, "for I hope the knowledge will be bitter and terrible to you, why you have been pursued by one man, and why, when the whole interest that Mr. Sampson represents, would have expended any money in hunting you down, you have been tracked to death at a single individual's charge. I hear you have had the name of Meltham on your lips sometimes?"

I saw, in addition to those other changes, a sudden stoppage come upon his breathing.

"When you sent the sweet girl whom you murdered (you know with what artfully-made-out surroundings and probabilities you sent her), to Meltham's office before taking her abroad, to originate the transaction that doomed her to the grave, it fell to Meltham's lot to see her and to speak with her. It did not fall to his lot to save her, though I know he would freely give his own life to have done it. He admired her;—I would say, he loved her deeply, if I thought it possible that you could understand the word. When she

was sacrificed, he was thoroughly assured of your guilt. Having lost her, he had but one object left in life, and that was, to avenge her and destroy you."

I saw the villain's nostrils rise and fall, convulsively; but, I saw no moving at his mouth.

"That man, Meltham," Beckwith steadily pursued, "was as absolutely certain that you could never elude him in this world, if he devoted himself to your destruction with his utmost fidelity and earnestness, and if he divided the sacred duty with no other duty in life, as he was certain that in achieving it he would be a poor instrument in the hands of Providence, and would do well before Heaven in striking you out from among living men. I am that man, and I thank God that I have done my work!"

If Slinkton had been running for his life from swift-footed savages, a dozen miles, he could not have shown more emphatic signs of being oppressed at heart and labouring for breath, than he showed now, when he looked at the pursuer who had so relentlessly hunted him down.

"You never saw me under my right name, before; you see me under my right name, now. You shall see me once again, in the body, when you are tried for your life. You shall see me once again, in the spirit, when the cord is round your neck, and the crowd are crying against you!"

When Meltham had spoken these last words, that miscreant suddenly turned away his face, and seemed to strike his mouth with his open hand. At the same instant, the room was filled with a new and powerful odour, and, almost at the same instant, he broke into a crooked run, leap, start—I have no name for the spasm—and fell, with a dull weight that shook the heavy old doors and windows in their frames.

That was the fitting end of him.

When we saw that he was dead, we drew away from the room, and Meltham, giving me his hand, said with a weary air:

"I have no more work on earth, my friend. But, I shall see her again, elsewhere."

It was in vain that I tried to rally him. He might have saved her, he said; he had not saved her, and he reproached himself; he had lost her, and he was broken-hearted.

"The purpose that sustained me, is over, Sampson, and there is nothing now to hold me to life. I am not fit for life; I am weak and spiritless; I have no hope and no object; my day is done."

In truth, I could hardly have believed that the broken man who then spoke to me, was the man who had so strongly and so differently impressed me when his purpose was yet before him. I used such entreaties with him, as I could; but, he still said, and always said, in a patient undemonstrative way—nothing could avail him—he was broken-hearted.

He died early in the next spring. He was buried by the side of the poor young lady for whom he had cherished those tender and unhappy regrets, and he left all he had to her

sister. She lived to be a happy wife and mother; she married my sister's son, who succeeded poor Meltham; she is living now; and her children ride about the garden on my walking-stick, when I go to see her.

### NEEDLEWOMAN'S HALL.

Of the grown-up unmarried women in this country, three out of four; of the widows, two in three; of the wives, a seventh part, earn their bread by their labour. Of these working women, nearly half a million live by the needle, and one-half of that number can only live at all by working twelve or sixteen hours a day.

The wretched earnings of the needle are, of course, to be ascribed to the excessive supply of workers, and the helplessness that urges thousands of them to work for any payment that will keep body and soul together. But the low payment of piece-work compels hasty production, and the good needlework in which a well-trained housewife takes delight, cannot be executed by the fingers urged by the fear that sixteen hours of work may fail to get over eighteenpennyworth of pay.

We speak of skill in the mere act of sewing, quite apart from the sublime science of millinery. Few needlewomen can afford themselves the time to cultivate such skill, yet very many happy wives who are themselves able to sew with deliberation, and delight in the perfection of their own work, can appreciate its value. Thousands of ladies are desiring in vain to know where they can find women who might come to the house of an employer, or take work to their own rooms and put into it stitchery that is all ornament and strength. Ladies are not, we think, unwilling to understand that skilled work is entitled to a price high in proportion to its rarity. But where is it to be found? Where is the careful housewife to look, in such a great bottle of hay as London, for example, when she wants to find the needle that will serve her turn? Wanted, a Needlewoman's Hall.

A great and, for the present, necessary burden under which the needlewoman lies, is the necessity of taking shopwork from the hands of agents or sub-agents, and paying them a serious percentage of risk money from their wretched earnings. The tradesman requires security for the material he sends out to be made; the needlewoman herself has none but her character to offer. Therefore, a more substantial middleman steps in to take from the tradesman his material and make himself responsible for its return out and stitched into a certain number of garments, at a stipulated price for each. This man employs the needlewomen, or perhaps sublets part of his contract to others who employ them, and, for the risk of the guarantee, as well as for the profits of the occupation he has taken on himself, the price paid to the needlewoman for her work is made very decidedly to differ from the price paid for it by the person who first gave it out. The deduction is most serious to a class that is obliged to know how—and does know how—to

do more with an odd sixpence a week than perhaps any other class of beings upon earth. The tradesman cannot be expected to make weekly distribution of material upon a large scale, to a crowd of poor and suffering women whom he does not know, depending upon nothing but the principles of human nature for his surety. The agency is unavoidable at present; although its abolition, if it could be got rid of, would close a paltry way of money-making, with which men could very well dispense. Wanted, a Needlewoman's Hall.

The want is, of a point of immediate contact between the whole body of the honest needlewomen in a town, and the whole body of the public. We cannot alter the main principles of trade, to raise the needlewoman's profits, but we can study those accidents of her condition which deprive her of the whole advantage to be had of patient industry. If only a little money given by the rich, will set up a machinery that shall secure permanently for some of the hardest and the worst rewarded workers in the land, most of them helpless single women, a condition permanently raised above its present level, let the fact be shown, and the help may be looked for, confidently.

A small beginning has been established this year in London: it is the Institution for the Employment of Needlewomen, Number Twenty-six, Lamb's Conduit-street. This institution may be taken as the germ of Needlewoman's Hall. It is quite modest in its pretension, but quite capable of developing its mustard-seed into a mustard-tree, if benignant showers shall prosper it. The founder of it, is a lady who had been drawn from one spectacle of sorrow to another, into a genuine examination of the state of the different classes of Our Homeless Poor, and who, under that title, told what she had seen of the condition of poor women in London, in a little book published by Messrs. Nisbet, of Berners-street. For example, a poor widow came with her two little boys in the "slack season" of needlework, to the Refuge at Field-lane. Eager to return to honest independence, she was started on her own account in a bare room, and obtained the loan of a chaff bed and bolster. What sum would suffice to furnish her with necessaries? Half-a-crown was all she borrowed for the purpose. She hunted up a chair with three legs and no back, which she could have for threepence, and she knew a carpenter who had a spare leg of a chair. In the same spirit she made successful search for all her other furniture; found a table, a cup, a saucer, a plate, a kettle and so forth; leaving fivepence of surplus when her furniture had all been bought. The fivepence she, with all simplicity of heart, carried back to her benefactor.

At Number Twenty-six, Lamb's Conduit-street, the upper part of a house has been taken; one or two sensible and active ladies manage the affairs; but there is an ornamental committee, and there is a sufficiency of episcopal and noble patrons to attract that part of the public which



likes best, in doing good, to follow the example of a lord. The institution was opened early in the year, and there resort to it now about sixty needlewomen. It takes work from shops and families; is answerable for its safe return, and distributes it, according to its power, to all women of honest character who come and ask for means of earning bread. From the payment received for the work, it deducts, for expenses, a halfpenny in the shilling from the out-door worker, and a penny in the shilling from the in-door worker—who has, in return, work found, house-room, fire, and a cup of tea. This leaves to the poor needlewoman much more than she could get if her work came to her through the hands of an agent, and this will make the institution self-supporting, if it be once fairly started with a small endowment, and be freely used as an Exchange by needlewomen and their customers. At present the system is one that enables any average needlewoman to earn about six shillings a week, or five and tenpence: some earning more, and a few less; and this may be roughly estimated as a shilling a week above their old rate, besides reduction of an hour or two a day in times of labour. The institution has a scale of reasonable market prices for the proper execution of work sent by private families, and it provides women to work, at the usual price of a shilling or eighteenpence a day and their board, for ladies at their homes. It makes no vain effort to revolutionise the market price of labour, but it goes as far as possible towards securing labour to the needlewoman all the year round, and the best price it will fetch.

In the house in Lamb's Conduit-street are airy workrooms; and every applicant for employment is at first set to earn her money by doing the work she receives, for two or three days, in the house, under the eye of a matron. Her value as a worker becomes known, and if she need improvement, something is, we believe, now done for her help to better skill. Thirty or forty women are now working for twelve hours a day within the home. They bring their own dinners, when—as is not always the case—they have any to bring, and their own bread. But at tea-time, tea is given them—a fact, perhaps, not reconcilable with the strictest principles of political economy, but a kind fact and a good fact none the less. We peeped in on the comfortable family tea-table, surrounded by poor isolated women, whose common distress was the bond of their kindred, that we should be very sorry to hear that the kettle ceased to sing its unpaid song at five o'clock. Besides, do they not pay their penny in the shilling?

In Needlewoman's Hall, then, there shall be a mighty kettle, and it shall be the pleasant labour of the public to support the modest, hearty efforts of the ladies in Lamb's Conduit-street, beginning with the public's representative, the Government. At present that which might be a little social blessing to poor women, Government needlework, passes through the hands of two or three agents, diminishing in value until the half-crown paid by Great Britain

for the making of a soldier's coat has yielded eighteenpence to agents and employers, but a shilling only to the actual maker. The shirt-maker's pay is, in this manner, reduced by threepence in the shilling. Government prices paid to those who earn them—as they might readily be through Needlewoman's Hall—would at once secure better employment to a large number of needlewomen, and afford some protection against the hunger of slack times: for Government work is not peculiarly incident to the fashionable season, and might, indeed, often be reserved for the slack time. Let Government, then, set a good example in this little matter—a little matter of hunger, thirst, sleeplessness, disease, ruin, and death, to many helpless women—and let Government see that those who do the nation's needlework, get their employment free of murderous abatement in payment. Were the Government work sent to Lamb's Conduit-street, much would be done at one stroke towards the development of Needlewoman's Hall. There would be no difficulty in finding requisite security. Lamb's Conduit-street can rise to the occasion.

Whoever is already in immediate relation with the needlewomen for whom he or she may have employment, is already doing all that can be done for the class in the way of ordinary business. But whoever, for requisite security against loss, employs needlewomen through an agent, who has his own profit to take out of the weary stitcher's hire, had better change his system, and help towards the establishment of Needlewoman's Hall by using the institution in Lamb's Conduit-street. Let the prudent housewife who does needlework herself, because she does not know where to look for a needlewoman with whose work she will be satisfied, look to Lamb's Conduit-street, and make her wants known to the secretary of the institution there. If anybody wants to endow something with five or ten pounds, and happens not already to have sent the five or ten pounds to one or both of the two prize-fighters, let him give a thought to the plant and machinery of Needlewoman's Hall. Again we say, in the name of London and of every one of our large towns, Wanted a Needlewoman's Hall. Let the institution be brought into busy life, and let its kettle be kept boiling.

#### ROMAN SHEEP-SHEARING.

THE revenue of the Roman popes as temporal princes has been but a trifle compared to the sums they have shorn their sheep of. This source of income is now drying up. It is a puny trickling where Niagara has been. In the old times popes and priests were, like other men, greedy of gain; and in the moral code of Europe, there was place given among the virtues to a pious fraud. The sincere Roman Catholic of our own day partakes of the knowledge of the day and its refinement; he avoids, therefore, wilful deception, even for a pious end. But in the famous days of Bayard, the most accomplished chevalier might, for his own gain, break



his word if he had not given it in writing; and a churchman who excited what he took to be devotion by invention of a pious legend or manufacture of a relic, really believed that he was furthering the interests of humanity, stirring up faith, and giving life to the divine graces in man. Upon this religious conviction rested the worldly fact, that every such fraud enriched the Church; and, of course, the meanest and worst of the clergy were not the least ready to display their ingenuity in this department of Church discipline. Sheep-shearing was much enjoyed by the profligate pope, while to the pious pope it was a means for the advancement of the Church itself as a whole, and of each individual whose spiritual life was awakened by the process.

At the outset, then, we require full allowance to be made for the change in the ethics of Europe; and while we talk of the old days of Roman sheep-shearing, would guard our readers against attributing to the well-educated Roman Catholic of our own day, faults that in their excess were as much faults of a period in the age of society as of a creed. But superstition survives not among Roman Catholics alone. Even otherwise sensible and unprejudiced people often ascribe power to relics, and believe stories in confirmation of such faith. A reverence for relics and belief in amulets exist in all parts of the world, and may be traced amongst the followers of all religions.

The first relic mentioned in the Christian Church is the true cross. The mother of Constantine, Helena, when visiting Palestine, is said to have found this cross. No contemporary author mentions the event, not even the great story-teller Eusebius, who gives an account of this journey of the empress. But it is set down as a fact in the annals of the Church, and celebrated by a feast-day. But Helena was said to have found not only the cross of Our Lord; she found with it those of the two thieves. The inscription of Pilate was not there, and how could she know which cross was the true one? The priests got thus out of the difficulty. They laid a sick man on one of the crosses, and he became worse. Therefore that was the cross of the wicked thief. The sick man was laid on one of the two other crosses. He became much better. This was the cross of the repentant thief. When laid on the third cross, the sick man jumped up, cured in an instant, and the true cross was discovered. Soon the graves of the apostles were discovered also, and their bones were brought to market. If their burial-place was not known, some holy father had a revelation. In this manner the remains of many saints and martyrs were discovered, and they all worked wonders. Although only the priests were generally honoured with such revelations, lay people might also be so blessed, with a priest's assistance. A very devoted woman, at St. Maurin, had taken St. John the Baptist for her patron saint, and for three years prayed daily that he would give her only some little part of his holy body, whichever member he might choose to part with. The saint being

inexorable, the woman at last grew desperate, and vowed to eat no food until St. John had granted her request. After a seven days' fast, she found a thumb on the altar. Three bishops wrapped this precious relic with great reverence in linen, and there fell three drops of blood from it, one for each bishop.

Considering the trouble we have to discover the remains of several of our great men, who died revered amongst their countrymen, where births and deaths are registered, it is wonderful to think how the priests found, even after centuries, not only the bones, but also the clothes of obscure men, executed as criminals. And it is yet more wonderful to think how, directed by revelations, the priests discovered of many saints such an abundance of bones, that they would be sufficient for six ordinary sinners. St. Denis, for instance, exists in two complete skeletons, one at St. Denis, and the other at St. Emmeran. There are two more of his spare skulls to be seen at Prague and at Bamberg, and he has a hand in Munich. Thus he must have had at least two bodies, four legs, five hands, and four heads.

The sale of relics was a very good business. But, when the bishops of Rome became popes, they interfered with the business of all general dealers in rag and bone, and assumed the monopoly of this most profitable speculation. They ordered every relic to be sent to Rome for examination, and then, if the possessor had substantial money evidence on its behalf, he got a bull decisive of its authenticity. A good relic was a blessing to a church. At the time of the Crusades, Europe grew rich in precious bones. When a town was taken, the first search of the conquerors was for relics, they being more precious than gold and gems. Louis the Saint, King of France, undertook two crusades, both ending ill; but he comforted himself by the purchase for an enormous sum of some splinters of the cross, a few nails, the sponge, the purple robe, and crown of thorns. When these false memorials arrived, the king and his whole court walked barefoot as far as Vincennes to meet them.

Henry the Lion brought back a great many relics when returning to Brunswick. The gem amongst them was the thumb of St. Mark, for which the Venetians offered him, in vain, a hundred thousand ducats. The whole wardrobe of the Virgin Mary, of St. Joseph, and of many other saints, was discovered. There was found the lance used by the Roman knight Longinus at the crucifixion; also the handkerchief with which St. Veronica wiped the face of Our Lord, and from the quantity of it that has been found, we are convinced that the saint must have had an enormous pocket. Her handkerchief was at least fifty yards square. There was found, also, the basin of green stone which the Queen of Sheba gave to Solomon, and out of which the passover was eaten; also there were found the pitchers used at the wedding of Cana, with wine in them which never diminished. Originally, there were only six pitchers, but they multiplied,

and were shown both at Cologne and Magdeburg. The splinters of the true cross were a year's firewood for any city, and of nails there were found many hundredweight. Thorns from the crown were everywhere, and many of them bled every Friday. The chalice used at the institution of the Lord's Supper was recovered, together with the bread remaining from that supper. Somebody found the dice used by the Roman soldiers when raffling for the tunic, which was to be seen at Treves, Argenteuil, Rome, Triant, and other places; the tunic in each town having a papal bull to prove its authenticity. One pair of the Virgin's slippers was particularly neat, but those she wore when visiting St. Elizabeth are wonderfully large and red. A precious wedding-ring of the Virgin was shown at Perugia, and her hair, which was of all colours, is preserved, together with some of her combs, in many places. Blood of Our Lord was found, sometimes in single drops, sometimes in bottles. Some of it, legend says, was collected by Nicodemus, who worked wonders with it. But the Jews persecuted him, and he was compelled to put it in a bird's beak, with a written document, and throw it into the sea. Of the beak, cast on the shore of Normandy, a miraculous discovery was made. A party, hunting in the neighbourhood, missed suddenly both dogs and stag. They were found at last, kneeling together before the miraculous beak. The Duke of Normandy built on the spot a monastery, called Bec, to which the holy blood brought a rich treasure of gold. At another time the very small breeches of St. Joseph were revealed, together with his tools. One of the thirty shekels of Judas was found, and also the twelve feet of stout rope with which he hung himself, and his small empty purse, with the lantern he used on the night of the betrayal. Even the perch was found on which the cock sat when he warned Peter, and a few of the cock's feathers.

Even relics from the Old Testament were discovered, after having been buried for several thousands of years. Among these were the staff with which Moses parted the Red Sea; manna from the desert; the beard of Noah; the brazen serpent; a piece of the rock out of which Moses struck water, with four holes in it, not larger than peas; the razor used by Dalila in shaving Samson; and the tuning-key of David's harp, which was shown at Erfurt. A relic of great reputation was the cloak of St. Martin, called cappa, or capella, which served as a flag in war. The priests who carried this holy standard were called Capellani, and the church in which it was kept, Capella. These names were afterwards used more generally, and from them are derived our chapel and chaplain.

The belief of the people was so strong, that the priests could venture to show even impossible things, and, before naming a few of them, let us distinctly say that we are not joking. There were to be seen, among other such marvels, the dagger and the shield of the archangel Michael, which he used when fighting the devil; a bottle full of Egyptian darkness; some of the sounds

of the bells which rang when Our Lord entered Jerusalem; a beam of the star which guided the three wise men of the East; a few sighs of St. Joseph, caught when he was planing knotty boards; and the thorn in the flesh which gave so much trouble to St. Paul. Pious frauds never seem to have been too gross for a believing crowd. A monk, named Eiselin, came, in the year fifteen hundred, to Aldingen, a little place in Wurtemberg, where he exhibited to the good Christians a feather of the wing of the angel Gabriel. He who kissed this feather—and paid for the kiss—was safe against infection from the plague. This precious feather was stolen; but the monk was none the poorer. In presence of his landlady, he filled the box that had contained the feather with stale hay, which he called hay from the manger in which Christ was laid when born; kiss, therefore, and pay, and be safe against infection. Pictures, libellous daubs, were produced as works of the Evangelist St. Luke. Others that fell from Heaven were not better painted. These pictures were not only revered as relics, but for the sake of their subjects were soon worshipped as idols. Question about the orthodoxy of this kind of service arose, and grew into bloody strife, which lasted for two centuries, occasioning a schism in the Christian Church. The Emperor Constantine the Fifth, who died in the eighth century, declared all pictures to be idols, and swept from the country all pictures of saints, as well as relics. He transformed the monasteries in Constantinople into barracks, and made public scold of monks and nuns.

In the West, this worship of images and relics also at first found resistance. Bihop Claudius of Turin, says: "If you worship the cross on which Christ suffered, you must also worship the ass on which he rode;" and this was really done afterwards. Other people, however, attached importance to the image service; it was adhered to in Europe, and adopted, at last, by the Greek Church also.

In the first days of the Christian Church, persons who, for gross misdemeanour, had been expelled from the community and were desirous of being readmitted, openly told their sins before the congregation, and this penitence was called confession. When the power of the priests increased, they changed this public confession into a secret one. Pope Innocent the Third, early in the thirteenth century, ordered every Catholic to confess privately to a priest, at least once a year, and submit to the penance he imposed. They who neglected this duty were to be excommunicated and deprived the rites of Christian burial. Thus it was given in the hands of the priest to absolve the confessor or not, and he used his discretion very shrewdly, with one eye upon the sinner's purse.

Purgatory was an invention of Pope Gregory the First, in the first years of the sixth century. The rule of this place was known to none but the priests, and they alone were able to judge how many paid masses were required for any soul's deliverance therefrom. The Crusades were

at first armed pilgrimages. The popes favoured them in hope of extending their power over Asia. They exercised, therefore, all means to induce people to take the cross. The chief inducement was the promise of indulgence. The pope ordered it to be preached through the Christian world, that all sins committed, were they ever so great, would be forgiven as soon as the sinner took the cross." This invention of indulgences was now worked by the popes in the most ingenious manner, and became their gold mine.

As there were some people who would hardly believe in the power of the pope to forgive sins, Clement the Sixth explained his right to it, and the whole theory of indulgence in this manner, by a bull of the year thirteen hundred and forty-two. He said in it: "The whole human kind might have been saved by one single drop of the blood of Christ, but having shed so much, and certainly not for nothing, this excess formed an inexhaustible Church treasure, which was still increased by the not superfluous merits of the saints and martyrs. The pope is the keeper of this treasure, and may dispense of it to any degree without fear of exhausting it." Whoever made a pilgrimage to this or that image of a saint, or to this or that place of grace, and paid money enough to the altar, received, not only indulgence for the sins he had committed, but even for those he might commit in years to come.

In Germany alone, there were about a hundred images of the Virgin to which pilgrims went. One single author enumerates twelve hundred in sundry lands. The most celebrated in the whole world is that of Loretto, horribly carved in wood (it was said) by the hands of St. Luke. The next in form is that of St. Iago de Compostella, where, on high church feasts, thirty thousand devotees assemble. Walldthuren, in Baden, is celebrated for the wonder-working corporate. This is a napkin, upon which to place the chalice with the plate of wafers. In the fourteenth century, a priest spilt some of the consecrated wine, and every drop of it made a stain like a divine head with the thorny crown. Before and after Corpus-Christi day, some forty thousand pilgrims fetch from the church red silk threads, which have been rubbed against this corporate. They are said to be a cure for erysipelas. More profitable still are those places of pilgrimage at which are kept the *very* holy relics to be seen once only in every seven years. The most precious treasure of this kind is in Aix-la-Chapelle; it contains a very large frock of Mary, the swaddling-clothes of Christ, made of a brownish-yellow felt, and the cloth on which was laid the head of John the Baptist. At the end of the fifteenth century, nearly a hundred and fifty thousand pilgrims came to Aix-la-Chapelle, and the harvest of the priests was very good; but in the present century, when the relics were shown only for a fortnight after a long intermission, they were visited only by forty thousand of the faithful. However, only sixteen years ago, about a million of people went to Trèves to kiss one of the many Holy Coats.

That the pope sheared the Christian sheep is allegory; but it is fact also that he is a breeder of real four-legged ewes and rams, and knows how to sell his wool at a price that would astonish all our farmers. He keeps a little flock of lambs, which have been consecrated over the graves of the Apostles, and from the wool of which the bishops' palls are woven.

The pallium, or pall, is originally a Roman cloak. Emperors, as a token of their grace, used to present such a cloak, dyed in purple and embroidered with gold, to the patriarchs and other bishops. The price set on a pall was very high indeed; the revenue got from this source pleased the popes well, and John the Eighth ordained that every archbishop who had not obtained his pall from Rome after three months' time was to be considered as deposed.

The popes gave, however, in the cloak some little value for the treasure of a price they set upon it; this was yet to be saved, so the cloak dwindled away into a worsted ribbon, a few inches wide, with a red cross for its ornament. Such ribbons are woven by nuns from the consecrated wool, and weigh about three ounces. The wool of the pope's little flock of four-legged lambs would fetch about three millions of florins.

The palls are the more profitable because archbishops are generally old men, who soon die out, and each archbishop is required to pay for a new pall. Nay, he must even do so when transferred to a new place. Some German bishops, those of Würzburg, Bamberg, and Passau, enjoyed like popes this precious right of the pall. The archbishop Marculf of Mayence was compelled to sell the left leg of a golden Christ to pay for his pall. The archbishop Arnold of Treves was very much at a loss when he received, together with the bills, two palls at once, sent to him by two opposition popes disputing each other.

A very golden idea crossed the holy brains of Boniface the Eighth. He was inventor of the Jubilee. They who made a pilgrimage to Rome in such a year, and deposited a certain sum on the altar of St. Peter, were to receive indulgence for all sins committed during the course of their lives. Who would not profit by such an opportunity? Sinners from all parts of Europe flocked to Rome. The year thirteen hundred brought two hundred thousand strangers there, who filled the pockets of the inhabitants, as well as the coffers of his Holiness. Some millions of pounds sterling were brought to the Pope. The harvest surpassed expectation, and it is no wonder that every pope, in his turn, longed to repeat the experiment. A hundred years is a long time. Clement the Sixth ordered that there should be jubilees every fifty years, because St. Peter had appeared to him and said, with a threatening gesture, "Open the gate!" Pope Urban the Sixth contrived three jubilees to the century by shortening the period to thirty-three years, in remembrance of the age of Our Lord. Sixtus the Fourth counted four jubilees to the century by fixing the period at five-and-twenty



years, "because human life is so short." The second jubilee under Clement the Sixth had a still greater success than the first. The crowd in the church was so great that there were many of the pilgrims crushed to death. Ten thousand of them died of plague; but their loss was not perceived, for the whole number amounted to one million and several hundreds of thousands. The revenue of this jubilee is estimated at more than twenty-two millions of ducats. In the jubilee under Nicholas the Fifth, the bridge over the Tiber could not resist the weight of the crowd; it gave way, and two hundred persons at once, said the priests, fell into Paradise.

The Reformation spoiled the jubilee. At the jubilee of thirty years ago there were not more foreigners in Rome than in other years, and the Italians who went did not give much. The princes also learnt to keep money in their own countries, and put difficulties in the way of pilgrims. The Austrian government even forbade its Italian subjects to go into Rome without a passport from Vienna.

Another good entry in the ledger of the popes came under the head of Annates, that is, the revenue of his first year, payable by every bishop to the pontifical see. The tax for dispensation from fasting, or other stipulations of the Church, was also very productive. That paid by the people who could not marry because of relationship was valuable when marriages between relatives were prohibited to the fourteenth degree. Some one took the trouble to calculate how many such relatives one person might on the average be said to have, and fixed the number at one million forty-eight thousand five hundred and seventy-six.

There was a tariff according to which indulgence for any sin was to be had at a fixed price. This list contained, in forty-two chapters, about five hundred items. If, for example, a clergyman committed wilful murder, he had to pay for absolution about one pound thirteen and sevenpence. The murder of a father, mother, brother, or sister was cheaper, and might be forgiven for some twelve shillings less. A heretic, willing to return to the bosom of the Roman Church, might be absolved and admitted for less than a guinea and a half. A mass at a house in an excommunicated town cost three or four pounds. By such traffic several popes scraped large sums together, and John the Twenty-Second, the son of a cobbler, left sixteen millions in gold and seventeen millions in bullion.

The revenue of the pontifical see, large as it was, did, however, not satisfy the luxurious Leo the Tenth, of the House of the Medicis. His children, relations, actors, singers, musicians, and artists absorbed enormous sums, and the "holy father" was very much at a loss for money. To get out of this disagreeable posi-

tion, he pretended to want money for carrying on war against the Turks, as well as to finish the Cathedral of St. Peter. But the Turk-tax would not work; it was a worn-out device, and even Cardinal Ximenes, the wise Spanish minister, forbade the collections, saying "he had very reliable intelligence that there was now nothing at all to be apprehended from the Turks." The pope, therefore, issued a bull, by which indulgence was given to all who would contribute to the building of St. Peter's. The whole Christian world was divided into districts, and travellers were sent out, called papal legates or commissioners.

In their price current all manner of crimes were quoted at the lowest figure. Infamous as the document is in itself, the concluding sentence crowns it worthily. Poor people cannot participate in such a comfort, for they, having no money, must do without. For half a ducat even clergymen were free to commit the basest of all crimes. The speculation answered so well, that the sums realised are beyond calculation. Leo the Tenth farmed out his indulgences to eminent persons, by whom they were underlet. One of the chief tenants of indulgences was the Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, who was at the same time Bishop of Halberstadt, Archbishop of Magdeburg, and Archbishop and Prince Elector of Mayence, and Cardinal. He owed thirty thousand ducats for pall-money, and hoped, as a dealer in indulgences, to make enough money to pay his debt. Some people bought indulgence for several hundreds of years, although they were old and had but a few years to live. Time to be passed in purgatory was included in these bargains. For such and such a sin, it was said, the penalty is twenty years of purgatory, and for another even thirty; an experienced sinner would thus easily be able to tot up the account against him, and by paying his score to the pope in cash value before he died, go straight to heaven. He who kissed a relic and paid for it, also obtained indulgence for a certain number of years. Archbishop Albrecht had such a treasure in relics, that indulgence was to be had through them for about eight billions of years.

Our own tribute to Rome of Peter's pence was instituted in the year 740 by Offa, King of Mercia, and was a tax payable from every house in England. It ceased when Henry the Eighth renounced the Pope, after having brought large treasure to the papal see.

A new Serial Tale, entitled

## A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE,

BY CHARLES LEVER,

Will be commenced on the 18th August (in No. 69), and continued from week to week until completed.

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